POLICY BRIEF: TACKLING THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND LEGAL IMPACTS OF ONLINE GAMBLING IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

Online gambling has rapidly become a pervasive issue in Indonesia, fueled by increased internet access and the widespread use of smartphones. This policy brief provides a comprehensive analysis of the social, economic, and legal impacts of online gambling in Indonesia, while offering actionable policy recommendations to mitigate its negative effects. This research synthesizes findings from six key studies and integrates insights from thematic analysis conducted through stakeholder interviews, including perspectives from psychologists, legal experts, law enforcement officials, and community leaders. The analysis highlights significant mental health challenges associated with online gambling, particularly among teenagers and family leaders, such as increased stress, anxiety, and family disintegration. Economically, online gambling leads to financial ruin for many families, resulting in debt accumulation, loss of assets, and broader community-level economic instability. Legally, the study identifies critical gaps in Indonesia's regulatory framework, which struggles to address the complexities of online gambling in the digital era. The findings underscore the need for comprehensive policy interventions, including updates to legal frameworks, enhanced law enforcement capabilities, public education initiatives, and community-based support systems. By implementing these strategies, Indonesia can more effectively combat the negative impacts of online gambling, protect vulnerable populations, and promote a healthier, more secure society.

Keywords: Online Gambling, Policy Brief, Social Impact, Economic Impact, Legal Framework

1. INTRODUCTION

Online gambling has become an increasingly prevalent phenomenon in Indonesia in recent years, driven by the rapid development of digital technology and widespread internet access (Budiman, Romadini, Aziz, & Pratama, 2022; Junaedi, 2024). The ease of access, particularly through the high penetration of smartphones, has made it possible for individuals from diverse age groups and socio-economic backgrounds to participate in online gambling activities, including poker, sports betting, and virtual casinos (King, Delfabbro, & Griffiths, 2010). Unlike in countries where gambling is legal and regulated, Indonesia faces unique challenges due to the illegal status of gambling, which complicates regulatory and law enforcement efforts (Catania & Griffiths, 2023).

The situation is particularly pressing in Indonesia because, despite stringent efforts by the government—such as the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology blocking over 800,000 pieces of online gambling content—new gambling sites continue to emerge, reflecting persistent high demand and significant enforcement challenges (Kominfo, 2024). In contrast to countries like the United Kingdom or Australia, where gambling is regulated and generates significant tax revenue, Indonesia must contend with the social and economic harms of unregulated and illegal gambling activities without the benefits of a legal framework to mitigate these risks (Parker et al.,

2024). This stark difference underscores the urgency of addressing online gambling in Indonesia, where the lack of regulation exacerbates the negative impacts on society.

The impact of online gambling is diverse and complex, encompassing economic, social, and mental health aspects. Economically, online gambling often leads to substantial financial losses for individuals and families, ultimately affecting their overall well-being (Arifina & Yusnadi, 2024; Castrén, Lind, Hagfors, & Salonen, 2021). Socially, online gambling is associated with an increase in crime rates such as theft and fraud, committed by individuals trapped in gambling addiction and seeking ways to finance their harmful habits (Lind, 2022; Huang, Shih, Lin, & Lin, 2022).

In addition to economic and social impacts, online gambling also significantly contributes to mental health issues, including gambling addiction, depression, and anxiety (Price, 2022; Wang, Abdelhamid, & Sanders, 2021; Brodeur, Audette-Chapdelaine, Savard, & Kairouz, 2021). There is a significant correlation between online gambling addiction and other mental disorders, necessitating a comprehensive approach to addressing these issues (Chóliz, Marcos, & Lázaro-Mateo, 2021).

Law enforcement against online gambling in Indonesia still faces many challenges. Many online gambling sites are based overseas, making them difficult for local law enforcement agencies to reach (Ariyanto & Ibrahim, 2024). Although there are regulations that prohibit all forms of gambling in Indonesia, the effectiveness of this law enforcement remains a significant issue (Abbott, 2020). Overall, the prevalence and impact of online gambling in Indonesia demand serious attention from various parties, including the government, law enforcement, health institutions, and the general public. A holistic and collaborative approach is required to address this issue, including education, prevention, more effective law enforcement, and support services for those affected (Arifina & Yusnadi, 2024).

Despite the existing body of research on online gambling, significant gaps persist in understanding its specific social and economic impacts within the Indonesian context. Current studies often generalize the consequences of gambling without adequately addressing the nuanced ways in which online gambling disrupts family cohesion, exacerbates economic vulnerabilities, and fuels community-level instability. Particularly under-researched are the mechanisms through which online gambling contributes to financial hardship and social disintegration within families, and the ripple effects these issues have on broader community dynamics. Furthermore, existing research seldom incorporates qualitative insights from key stakeholders, such as law enforcement officials, mental health professionals, and community leaders. These perspectives are essential for capturing the lived experiences and operational challenges faced by those directly involved in addressing the impacts of online gambling, thereby providing a more holistic and actionable understanding of the issue.

This study aims to fill these gaps by providing a thorough analysis of the social, economic, and legal impacts of online gambling in Indonesia and evaluating the effectiveness of existing policies. The focus of this research includes evaluating the social and mental health impacts, analyzing the economic impacts, assessing the effectiveness of policies and regulations, and developing more effective policy recommendations. By integrating both empirical research and qualitative insights from stakeholder interviews, this study offers novel perspectives that contribute to the existing literature and inform more effective interventions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Online Gambling

Online gambling has grown rapidly alongside the advancement of digital technology and expanded internet access. Various forms of gambling, such as sports betting, casino games, poker, and lotteries, can now be accessed anytime and anywhere through digital devices (King et al., 2010). This development has not only changed the way people gamble but also introduced new challenges in terms of regulation and law enforcement, especially in countries where gambling is considered illegal (Catania & Griffiths, 2023).

2.2. Social and Mental Health Impacts

The social impacts of online gambling are significant, particularly related to the mental health of the individuals involved. Engagement in online gambling has been shown to increase the risk of addiction, which is often accompanied by mental disorders such as anxiety, depression, and stress (Price, 2022). This addiction can also isolate individuals from their social environments, worsening mental conditions and creating a difficult-to-break cycle of addiction (Chóliz et al., 2021). Adolescents and young adults are especially susceptible to higher levels of addiction, which impacts family relationships and their academic performance (Sidiq, Binti Abdullah Suhaimi, & Kalfin, 2024).

In addition, online gambling addiction also disrupts family dynamics. Research shows that this addiction can cause tension in relationships among family members, often leading to prolonged conflicts and family disintegration (Arifina & Yusnadi, 2024). Many individuals involved in online gambling tend to hide their activities, which can reduce communication and trust within the family (Shaw, Forbush, Schlinder, Rosenman, & Black, 2007).

2.3. Economic Impacts

Online gambling also has significant economic impacts, with financial losses experienced by individuals and families. Research indicates that individuals involved in online gambling often spend more money than they can afford, leading to debt accumulation and, in some cases, bankruptcy (Hakansson & Widinghoff, 2020). These economic losses not only affect the individuals but also their families, who often have to bear the financial burden caused by gambling addiction (Marko, Thomas, Pitt, & Daube, 2023). Furthermore, these economic losses often trigger criminal activities such as theft and fraud as individuals try to cover their gambling losses (Lind, 2022).

2.4. Legal and Regulatory Challenges

Law enforcement against online gambling faces various challenges. The cross-border nature of online gambling means that these sites are often based overseas, making it difficult for local law enforcement to reach and shut them down (Catania & Griffiths, 2023). The technology used by online gambling sites is also becoming more sophisticated, making them harder to detect and block by authorities (Abbott, 2020). In Indonesia, despite government efforts to block access to online gambling sites, the results have been limited. More than 800,000 pieces of online gambling-related content have been blocked, but new sites continue to emerge, indicating that these efforts are not yet sufficient to address the problem (Kominfo, 2024). This highlights the need for a more

comprehensive approach to law enforcement, including increased international cooperation and strengthened information technology regulations (Ariyanto & Ibrahim, 2024).

2.5. Policies and Interventions

Given the complexity and wide-reaching impacts of online gambling, more holistic policies are needed to address the issue. These policies should include a multidisciplinary approach involving cooperation between the government, law enforcement, health institutions, and the community. Education and prevention programs should focus on vulnerable groups, such as adolescents, to raise awareness of the dangers of online gambling and provide psychosocial support for those affected (Hofmarcher, Romild, Spångberg, Persson, & Håkansson, 2020). Additionally, stricter regulations and more effective law enforcement are necessary to reduce the prevalence of online gambling and protect society from its negative impacts (Sulkunen et al., 2021).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the social, economic, and legal impacts of online gambling in Indonesia, as well as the effectiveness of existing policies. This approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth understanding of complex phenomena and provides a comprehensive overview of the impacts of online gambling and how current policies are implemented.

3.1. Data Collection

Data for this study were obtained from two primary sources: literature review and in-depth interviews.

1) Literature Review: This article analyzes six studies related to the impact of online gambling from social, economic, and legal perspectives. These studies cover various contexts, such as the influence of online gambling on the mental health of teenagers (Panimbang, Banten), family harmony (Bunga Tanjung Village), and family economy (Gedang Village). Additionally, this research also reviews the effectiveness of the police's role in eradicating online gambling crimes and provides a juridical review of these crimes in Indonesia.

2) In-Depth Interviews**:** Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including law enforcement officers, legal experts, and victims of online gambling. Respondents were purposively selected based on their knowledge and experience related to online gambling issues. These interviews aimed to gain insights into the challenges of law enforcement, perspectives on existing regulations, and personal experiences related to online gambling.

3.2. Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. This analysis was conducted through the following steps:

1) Initial Coding**:** Data from interviews and literature reviews were coded based on relevant themes, such as social impacts (mental health, family disintegration), economic impacts (financial losses, work productivity), and legal aspects (effectiveness of law enforcement, regulatory challenges).

2) Thematic Categorization:
   In this study, thematic analysis was employed to systematically explore and identify key patterns across the qualitative data gathered from stakeholder interviews. Thematic analysis is a method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within data. It is particularly useful in qualitative research where the goal is to explore complex, context-specific phenomena.
   a. Identification of Themes: The process began with a thorough reading and re-reading of the interview transcripts to familiarize the researcher with the data. This initial phase involved open coding, where significant statements, phrases, or concepts were highlighted and assigned preliminary codes. These codes were then reviewed and grouped based on similarities and patterns across different interviews.
   b. Categorization and Refinement: After the initial coding, the next step involved categorizing these codes into broader themes. This was done by looking for recurring ideas or issues that appeared significant across multiple interviews. The themes were developed based on their relevance to the research questions, such as the social impact of online gambling, economic consequences, and challenges in law enforcement. The themes were refined through a process of constant comparison, where new data were continually compared with existing themes to ensure consistency and relevance.
   c. Analysis and Interpretation: Once the themes were established, they were analyzed in relation to the research objectives. The analysis focused on understanding the underlying patterns and how these themes interrelate to provide a comprehensive view of the impacts of online gambling in Indonesia. For example, the theme of "Family Economic Impact" was examined through the lens of both financial loss and its broader implications for community economic stability. Similarly, "Mental Health Impacts" were explored by linking the experiences of individual stakeholders to the broader social context.
   d. Validation: To enhance the reliability of the thematic analysis, peer debriefing was conducted, where the identified themes and interpretations were discussed with colleagues to ensure they were representative of the data. Triangulation was also used by comparing the findings with the literature review and quantitative data from the studies analyzed, providing a more robust and well-rounded interpretation of the results.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Research Results

4.1.1. Family Economic Impact of Online Gambling

The research conducted by Nurainun & Mayasari highlights the serious impact of online gambling addiction on family economies in Gedang Village, Sungai Penuh City (Nurainun & Mayasari, 2024). The study found that online gambling addiction, particularly through mobile phone use, has led to significant financial losses for many families. Individuals involved in online gambling tend to spend more money than they can afford, often resulting in debt accumulation and even criminal activities such as theft to fund their addiction. The study also identified that online gambling addiction can lead to the loss of family assets, with some individuals selling property or household items to

cover their gambling losses. As a result, the economic well-being of families is disrupted, which in turn affects their overall quality of life.

The study also found that some of the main factors driving the prevalence of online gambling in Gedang Village include low levels of education and religious understanding. Although the community is aware that gambling is prohibited under Islamic law, the desire to earn quick money keeps them engaged in these activities. The social environment also plays a significant role, where daily interactions with others who are also involved in online gambling reinforce this addictive behavior.

The findings of this research have important implications for public policy, particularly in the context of regulation and public education. The damaging economic impact of online gambling reinforces the need for stricter regulation and more effective law enforcement to control access and involvement in online gambling. Additionally, public education programs and awareness campaigns are urgently needed to prevent addiction, especially in communities with low levels of education.

Based on the findings of this study, several policy recommendations can be implemented, including public education on the economic and social dangers of online gambling through programs involving religious leaders and community leaders. Another recommendation is the development of prevention programs targeting vulnerable groups, such as adolescents and individuals from low-income backgrounds, to reduce the risk of online gambling addiction. Finally, stricter law enforcement against online gambling service providers and those involved, as well as strengthening cooperation between the government and communities to reduce the prevalence of online gambling.

The findings from this research underscore that online gambling addiction not only negatively impacts individuals but also undermines the overall economic stability of families. Therefore, coordinated efforts involving various stakeholders are needed to effectively address this issue, including through enhanced regulation, education, and improved law enforcement.

4.1.2. Mental Health Impacts on Teenagers

The research conducted by Sidiq investigated the impact of online gambling on the mental health of teenagers in Panimbang District, Banten (Sidiq et al., 2024). The results indicate that involvement in online gambling significantly increases levels of stress, anxiety, and depression among teenagers. Those engaged in online gambling exhibit higher levels of social anxiety and a decline in sleep quality, which can negatively affect their overall mental health. The study also found a positive correlation between online gambling activities and impulsive behavior in teenagers. Teens involved in online gambling tend to make decisions without considering long-term consequences, which can impact various aspects of their lives, including social relationships, academic performance, and financial conditions. High levels of impulsivity can exacerbate the cycle of addictive behavior, reinforcing the negative impacts of online gambling.

These findings have important implications for the development of policies related to prevention and early intervention. The research highlights the need to raise awareness among teenagers about the risks associated with online gambling and to provide strategies for managing stress, anxiety, and impulsive behavior. The proposed policies include integrating prevention programs into school curricula and involving communities in public awareness campaigns.

Based on these findings, several policy recommendations can be implemented, such as educating teenagers through school curricula that include information about the mental health risks associated with online gambling. Additionally, recommendations include increasing access to psychosocial support for teenagers involved in online gambling, including counseling and impulse management training, as well as public awareness campaigns involving parents, teachers, and community members to recognize warning signs and preventive measures.

This study emphasizes that online gambling activities have a significant negative impact on the mental health of teenagers in Panimbang District. Therefore, effective prevention and intervention measures are essential to protect the psychological well-being of young people. Collaboration between schools, families, and communities is expected to create an environment that supports positive growth and development for teenagers.

4.1.3. Effectiveness of Police in Combating Online Gambling

The research conducted by Listiyanto & Arpangi evaluated the effectiveness of the police's role in eradicating online gambling crimes in the digital era, focusing on the jurisdiction of the Grobogan Police (Listiyanto & Arpangi, 2021). The study found that the eradication of online gambling crimes in this area has not been effective. One of the main reasons is the lack of reports from the community accompanied by evidence, which hinders law enforcement efforts.

The study identified several major challenges faced by the police in combating online gambling crimes : Lack of Community Reports**:** people are often reluctant to report online gambling cases due to fear of legal involvement or a lack of trust in law enforcement. Limited Resources and Infrastructure**:** digital law enforcement still faces limitations in terms of technology and human resources capable of addressing cybercrime. Challenges in Evidence Gathering**:** although electronic evidence such as bank transfers and emails can be used as legal evidence, gathering such evidence is often difficult without community reports to support it.

The study also identified several factors contributing to the prevalence of online gambling in the Grobogan Police jurisdiction, including Economic Factors**:** economic constraints, especially among the lower-middle class, drive individuals to seek quick solutions through online gambling. Availability of Technology**:** easy access to the internet and smart devices facilitates online gambling practices, making it more challenging to eradicate. Non-compliance with the Law**:** low legal awareness and a lack of strict enforcement lead the public to feel free to engage in online gambling.

The findings of this study have important implications for the development of more effective policies to combat online gambling crimes. Several recommended measures include Strengthening Technology and Law Enforcement Capacity**:** enhancing technological capabilities and human resources in digital law enforcement to be more effective in detecting and eradicating online gambling crimes. Community Education**:** increasing public awareness of the negative impacts of online gambling and the importance of reporting illegal activities to authorities. Stricter Law Enforcement**:** strengthening cooperation between law enforcement and internet service providers to block online gambling sites and take firm action against offenders.

The study concludes that the effectiveness of the police's role in eradicating online gambling still needs improvement, particularly through the enhancement of facilities, technology, and legal education for the community. With a more comprehensive

approach, it is expected that law enforcement against online gambling crimes can be carried out more effectively and thoroughly.

4.1.4. Legal Violations in Online Game Sponsorship

The research conducted by Ahmad evaluated the legal aspects concerning online game tournament organizers who receive sponsorships from online gambling sites in Indonesia (Ahmad, 2023). This study highlights that placing sponsorships from online gambling sites at events or tournaments, especially those widely broadcasted through platforms like YouTube and social media, constitutes a legal violation under Article 27 Paragraph (2) of Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE) and Article 303 of the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP).

In the cases examined, event organizers such as Zodiac Esports and Art Republic were found to have placed sponsorships from gambling sites like dewacash.com and poker88, which are illegal actions. The study explains that even though these sponsorships were explicitly linked to online gambling sites, no significant legal actions have been taken against these event organizers to date, indicating weaknesses in law enforcement.

The study also emphasizes that these actions not only violate conventional gambling laws in Indonesia but also involve breaches of digital law under the ITE Law, which regulates the prohibition of disseminating and accessing gambling information through electronic media.

The research identifies the penalties that can be imposed on tournament organizers involved in these activities, including: a maximum imprisonment of 10 years or a fine of up to Rp 25 million in accordance with Article 303 of the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP). A maximum imprisonment of 6 years or a fine of up to Rp 1 billion in accordance with Article 27 Paragraph (2) of the ITE Law. Additionally, parties who broadcast tournaments sponsored by online gambling sites may face additional penalties under broadcasting laws, with fines that can reach up to Rp 10 billion.

The study offers several policy recommendations to improve law enforcement related to online gambling sponsorships: Stricter law enforcement against event organizers who collaborate with online gambling sites, including more in-depth investigations and stricter oversight of e-sports activities and events broadcasted online. Increasing legal awareness among event organizers and the general public about the dangers and legal consequences of accepting sponsorships from online gambling sites. Collaboration between law enforcement and internet regulators to more effectively block online gambling sites and prevent their spread through social media and other digital platforms.

This study asserts that accepting sponsorships from online gambling sites is a serious violation under Indonesian law and requires more stringent law enforcement actions. The proposed recommendations are expected to enhance the effectiveness of policies and law enforcement in handling similar cases in the future.

4.1.5. Family Harmony Disruption Due to Slot Gambling

The research conducted by Arifina & Yusnadi explores the impact of online gambling addiction, particularly slot gambling, on family harmony in Bunga Tanjung Village (Arifina & Yusnadi, 2024). The study found that online gambling addiction significantly disrupts family dynamics, leading to increased conflict and emotional distress within households. Family leaders who are addicted to online slot games tend to neglect their familial responsibilities, which often results in strained relationships with their spouses and children.

The study identified several key factors contributing to this disruption, including the financial burden caused by gambling losses, which exacerbates tensions within the family. The addiction also leads to decreased communication and trust among family members, as the addicted individuals often hide their gambling activities. The study found that in severe cases, the addiction could lead to family disintegration, with instances of separation or divorce being reported.

The findings highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions aimed at restoring family harmony in households affected by online gambling addiction. The research suggests the implementation of family counseling programs and community-based initiatives to raise awareness about the risks of online gambling. Additionally, there is a need for legal and social support systems to assist families in overcoming the challenges posed by gambling addiction.

4.1.6. Juridical Review of Online Gambling Crimes in Indonesia

The study conducted by Yasmirah Mandasari Saragih and colleagues provides a juridical review of online gambling crimes in Indonesia (Yasmirah mandasari, 2018). The research examines the application of Indonesian law, particularly the amendments made through Law Number 19 of 2016 which modified Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Information and Electronic Transactions (ITE Law), and Article 303 of the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP)**,** which governs gambling activities.

The study highlights the difficulties faced in enforcing these laws, particularly the challenges related to cross-border online gambling operations. Despite existing regulations, law enforcement agencies struggle to effectively tackle online gambling crimes due to limited technological capabilities and insufficient cooperation between law enforcement agencies and internet service providers. The study also identifies a lack of public awareness about the legal consequences of engaging in online gambling, which further complicates enforcement efforts.

Moreover, the research points out that the current legal framework is not fully equipped to handle the rapid evolution of digital gambling platforms. The study calls for an urgent review and update of existing laws to address the unique challenges posed by online gambling, including stronger international collaboration and the development of specialized cybercrime units within law enforcement agencies.

The findings underscore the need for comprehensive legal reforms to enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement in combating online gambling crimes. The study also recommends increasing public education about the legal risks associated with online gambling and strengthening the legal infrastructure to better support law enforcement efforts.

4.2. Stakeholder Interviews
4.2.1. Social and Mental Health Impacts

Interviews with key stakeholders, including psychologists, social workers, and community leaders, revealed deep concerns about the escalating social and mental health impacts of online gambling, particularly among vulnerable populations such as teenagers and low-income families. Stakeholders consistently highlighted that online gambling addiction has led to significant increases in mental health issues, including stress, anxiety, and depression. These problems are often exacerbated by the isolation experienced by individuals who engage in online gambling, as they withdraw from social interactions and family life.

One psychologist noted, "We are seeing a growing number of teenagers who are not only addicted to online gambling but are also struggling with severe anxiety and depression as a result. Their academic performance declines, and their relationships with family members deteriorate rapidly." This observation aligns with the findings of Sidiq, Suhaimi, and Kalfin (2024) regarding the mental health impacts on teenagers in Panimbang District.

Moreover, community leaders emphasized that the social fabric of many communities is being eroded as gambling-related conflicts within families become more frequent. A social worker from Gedang Village explained, "The loss of trust and constant arguments over money lost in gambling are tearing families apart. This isn't just a financial issue; it's a social crisis that affects everyone in the community." This perspective echoes the findings of Nurainun and Mayasari (2024), who identified the destructive impact of gambling on family harmony and economic stability.

4.2.2. Economic Impacts

Discussions with economic experts and local government officials further illuminated the severe economic consequences of online gambling. Stakeholders pointed out that the financial losses incurred by individuals often lead to broader economic instability within communities, especially in areas with already fragile economies. An economic analyst noted, "In villages like Bunga Tanjung and Gedang, where economic opportunities are limited, the money lost to online gambling is devastating. It's not just about individual bankruptcy; it's about the erosion of economic resilience at the community level."

Officials also expressed concern over the link between online gambling and increased criminal activity. A police officer stated, "We've seen a rise in petty crimes, such as theft and fraud, as individuals try to recover their gambling losses. This not only affects the victims but also puts additional strain on our law enforcement resources." This aligns with the research findings by Arifina and Yusnadi (2024), which highlighted the financial strain caused by gambling and its ripple effects on family harmony.

4.2.3. Legal Aspects and Law Enforcement

Interviews with legal experts and law enforcement officials underscored the challenges of enforcing existing gambling laws, particularly in the digital space. Many stakeholders pointed out that the current legal framework is outdated and ill-equipped to handle the complexities of online gambling. A legal expert remarked, "The rapid evolution of digital platforms has outpaced our laws. What we need are more robust

regulations that address the unique challenges of online gambling, including cross-border operations."

Law enforcement officials also cited significant obstacles in gathering evidence and prosecuting offenders. "Without cooperation from internet service providers and better technology, our efforts to shut down these gambling sites are hampered," said a senior police officer. This challenge was also identified in the research conducted by Listiyanto and Arpangi (2021), which found that the effectiveness of police efforts in combating online gambling crimes was limited by technological and resource constraints.

Moreover, stakeholders discussed the need for greater public awareness about the legal consequences of online gambling. One legal advocate noted, "Many people don't realize that accepting sponsorships from gambling sites or even participating in online gambling can result in severe legal penalties. Public education is crucial if we want to curb these activities." This reinforces the findings of Risyad Fadhillah Ahmad (2023), who highlighted the legal violations involved in accepting sponsorships from online.

4.2.4. Community-Based Action Steps

The insights gathered from stakeholder interviews highlight the importance of grassroots-level initiatives in addressing the social and economic impacts of online gambling. While broader policy changes are essential, community-driven actions are equally crucial for creating a resilient and supportive environment.

1) Strengthening Community Support Networks:

Communities play a pivotal role in supporting individuals and families affected by online gambling. Establishing local support networks that offer peer counseling, financial literacy workshops, and access to mental health services can help mitigate the negative impacts of gambling. Community centers can serve as hubs for these activities, ensuring that support is accessible to those in need.

2) Implementing Peer Education Programs:

Education is a powerful tool in preventing online gambling addiction. Peer education programs, especially those targeting youth, can effectively spread awareness about the risks of online gambling. Training young community leaders to educate their peers on these issues can foster a culture of prevention and empower individuals to make informed choices.

3) Encouraging Community Reporting Mechanisms:

To enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts, communities should be encouraged to report gambling activities through anonymous and secure reporting mechanisms. This can help overcome the fear of legal repercussions or social stigma, making it easier for individuals to contribute to the fight against illegal gambling without fear of retaliation.

4) Engaging Religious and Community Leaders:

Religious and community leaders have a significant influence on social norms and behaviors. Their involvement in community outreach programs can help promote ethical and legal values, discouraging participation in online gambling and reinforcing the social fabric.

These community-based action steps complement broader policy measures by providing localized, practical solutions that address the specific needs and challenges faced by individuals and families at the grassroots level.

4.3. Thematic Analysis
4.3.1. Mental Health and Social Impacts
1) Mental Health Consequences of Online Gambling

The studies by Sidiq, Suhaimi, and Kalfin (2024) and Arifina and Yusnadi (2024) consistently demonstrate that online gambling, particularly among teenagers and family heads, significantly exacerbates mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, and depression. In Panimbang District, Banten, teenagers involved in online gambling exhibited higher levels of social anxiety and deteriorating sleep quality, which contributed to their overall mental health decline. Similarly, in Bunga Tanjung Village, online slot gambling led to increased family conflict, emotional distress, and in severe cases, family disintegration.

Interviews with psychologists and community leaders corroborate these findings, highlighting the widespread impact of online gambling on mental health within communities. Stakeholders observed a rising number of teenagers facing anxiety and depression due to their involvement in online gambling, with the issue further complicated by their social isolation. Family dynamics are similarly strained, as gambling addiction erodes trust and communication within households, leading to conflicts and, in some cases, separation or divorce.

2) Social Disintegration

Nurainun and Mayasari (2024) found that online gambling addiction in Gedang Village led to the erosion of family economic stability, which in turn disrupted the social fabric of the community. The financial strain caused by gambling losses contributed to conflicts within families and the eventual disintegration of social bonds.

Social workers emphasized the role of social environments in perpetuating online gambling addiction, where daily interactions with others involved in gambling reinforce addictive behaviors. The resulting social disintegration not only affects individual families but also undermines community cohesion, leading to broader societal issues.

4.3.2. Economic Impacts

Multiple studies, including those by Nurainun and Mayasari (2024) and Arifina and Yusnadi (2024), highlight the severe financial consequences of online gambling. Families in Gedang and Bunga Tanjung Villages reported significant financial losses due to gambling, leading to debt accumulation, the sale of family assets, and even criminal activities to cover gambling debts. This financial instability not only affected individual families but also posed a risk to the broader economic stability of these

Economic experts and local government officials echoed these concerns, noting that the financial fallout from online gambling extends beyond individual households, threatening the economic resilience of entire communities. The ripple effect of these losses includes increased poverty levels, reduced economic productivity, and a greater reliance on social services.

4.3.3. Link Between Gambling and Crime

The research by Arifina and Yusnadi (2024) and Listiyanto and Arpangi (2021) identified a clear connection between online gambling and increased criminal activity. Individuals desperate to recover their gambling losses often resort to theft, fraud, or other criminal behaviors, exacerbating social and economic problems.

Law enforcement officials confirmed that they have observed a rise in petty crimes linked to gambling debts. This increase in criminal activity not only affects public safety but also diverts resources away from other critical areas of law enforcement.

4.3.4. Legal Aspects and Law Enforcement
1) Challenges in Enforcing Gambling Laws

The studies by Listiyanto and Arpangi (2021) and Yasmirah Mandasari Saragih et al. (2023) highlight the difficulties law enforcement agencies face in tackling online gambling crimes. Issues such as the lack of technological resources, insufficient cooperation from internet service providers, and the cross-border nature of online gambling operations have significantly hindered the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts.

Legal experts and police officers pointed out that the rapid evolution of digital platforms has outpaced existing legal frameworks, making it difficult to enforce laws effectively. Additionally, the reluctance of the public to report gambling activities, due to fear of legal repercussions or distrust in law enforcement, further complicates enforcement efforts.

2) Need for Legal Reform and Public Education

Risyad Fadhillah Ahmad (2023) and Saragih et al. (2023) emphasize the need for legal reforms to address the challenges posed by online gambling. The research suggests updating existing laws to better regulate online gambling activities and enhance the capacity of law enforcement agencies to prosecute offenders effectively. Public education is also identified as a critical component in preventing the spread of online gambling by increasing awareness of its legal consequences.

Stakeholders, including legal advocates and community leaders, stressed the importance of educating the public about the legal and social risks associated with online gambling. They recommend integrating legal education into community outreach programs and school curricula to raise awareness and discourage participation in illegal gambling activities.

3) Law Enforcement and Internet Regulation

The research by Ahmad (2023) and Listiyanto and Arpangi (2021) suggests that cooperation between law enforcement agencies and internet regulators is crucial for effectively combating online gambling. This includes stricter monitoring of online platforms, better tools for tracking illegal activities, and stronger penalties for those involved in organizing or promoting online gambling.

Law enforcement officials and internet regulators emphasized the need for improved collaboration to block access to gambling sites and monitor online activities more effectively. They also suggested the establishment of specialized cybercrime units to address the unique challenges of enforcing gambling laws in the digital era

4.4. Discussion

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive analysis of the social, economic, and legal impacts of online gambling in Indonesia, drawing from both empirical research and stakeholder insights. This discussion will compare these findings

with existing literature to highlight similarities, differences, and the unique contributions of this study.

4.4.1. Social and Mental Health Impacts

The significant mental health challenges associated with online gambling, particularly among teenagers and family leaders, align with findings from previous studies. Sidiq, Suhaimi, and Kalfin (2024) found that teenagers involved in online gambling exhibited heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. These findings are consistent with those of Brodeur et al. (2021) and Wang et al. (2021), who also reported that gambling is strongly correlated with mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. However, while Brodeur et al. (2021) primarily focused on general gambling behaviors, this study emphasizes the specific mental health impacts of online gambling in the Indonesian context, which is less explored in the existing literature.

A noteworthy addition of this study is the exploration of the social impacts on family dynamics, particularly the disintegration of family units due to gambling addiction. Arifina and Yusnadi (2024) identified that gambling addiction in family heads leads to increased household conflicts and emotional distress, often resulting in family disintegration. This aligns with Shaw et al. (2007), who discussed the negative effects of gambling on family relationships, but the current study further expands on this by detailing the specific pathways through which online gambling exacerbates these issues in Indonesia, such as through financial secrecy and reduced communication within families.

4.4.2 Economic Impacts

The economic consequences of online gambling found in this study, including financial ruin, debt accumulation, and the loss of family assets, are consistent with prior research. For example, Castrén et al. (2021) and Hakansson & Widinghoff (2020) both found that gambling-related financial losses often lead to severe economic hardship and, in some cases, bankruptcy. However, this study extends these findings by examining the broader community-level economic instability that arises in areas with high levels of online gambling, which is less frequently addressed in the existing literature.

In contrast to studies that have primarily focused on the economic impacts at the individual level, such as Lind (2022), who linked gambling to an increase in criminal activities like theft and fraud, this study highlights the systemic economic pressures that online gambling places on entire communities. This includes not only the direct financial losses suffered by individuals but also the indirect economic impacts, such as reduced economic productivity and increased reliance on social services, which are amplified in communities with prevalent online gambling.

4.4.3 Legal Aspects and Law Enforcement

The challenges faced by law enforcement in regulating online gambling, as identified in this study, are consistent with the findings of Ariyanto and Ibrahim (2024) and Abbott (2020), who highlighted the difficulties in enforcing gambling laws due to the cross-border nature of online gambling operations. Similar to these studies, the current research identifies the limited technological capabilities and inadequate cooperation with ISPs as major barriers to effective law enforcement.

However, this study contributes new insights by exploring the perspectives of local law enforcement officials, who emphasized the lack of public cooperation as a critical issue. Unlike previous studies that mainly focus on institutional challenges, this study reveals how community-level reluctance to report gambling activities exacerbates the difficulty of law enforcement. This finding suggests that improving public awareness and encouraging community reporting could be key strategies in enhancing the effectiveness of legal interventions.

4.3.4 Policy Implications and Recommendations

The combined insights from the research studies and stakeholder interviews underscore the need for a comprehensive and multifaceted policy response to the challenges posed by online gambling in Indonesia. These recommendations are designed to be both specific and feasible within the current socio-political context.

A. Legal Reforms and Law Enforcement Enhancement
1) Updating and Strengthening Gambling Laws:

The existing gambling laws in Indonesia require updates to address the complexities of online gambling, particularly in the digital era. This includes the introduction of specific provisions targeting online gambling, clarifying penalties, and incorporating regulations that address cross-border operations. For instance, amendments could include higher penalties for organizers of online gambling platforms and clearer jurisdictional guidelines for international cases.

2) Establishing Specialized Cybercrime Units:

Given the sophistication of online gambling operations, it is essential to establish specialized cybercrime units within law enforcement agencies. These units should be equipped with advanced technological tools, such as AI-based monitoring systems and blockchain analysis software, to trace and disrupt financial transactions linked to online gambling. Collaboration with international cybercrime agencies could enhance the ability to tackle cross-border operations effectively.

3) Improving Collaboration with ISPs:

Strengthening partnerships with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) is crucial for monitoring and blocking access to online gambling sites. Legal frameworks should be revised to mandate ISPs' cooperation in identifying and shutting down gambling websites swiftly. Implementing automated content filtering technologies, similar to those used for detecting illegal content, could increase the effectiveness of these efforts.

B. Public Education and Awareness
1) Integrating Gambling Awareness into School Curricula:

To prevent online gambling addiction from a young age, gambling awareness should be integrated into the national education curriculum. This could involve developing modules on the risks of online gambling, the psychological effects of addiction, and legal consequences. Educational materials should be tailored to different age groups and include interactive content to engage students effectively.

2) Launching Nationwide Public Education Campaigns:

A nationwide campaign using various media platforms (TV, radio, social media) is essential to raise awareness about the dangers of online gambling. These campaigns should target vulnerable populations, including teenagers and economically

disadvantaged communities. The government could collaborate with NGOs and media organizations to design culturally relevant messages that resonate with different segments of the population.

3) Engaging Community and Religious Leaders:

Community and religious leaders hold significant influence in Indonesian society. Their involvement in promoting ethical and legal aspects of avoiding online gambling can reinforce the message and encourage community-wide adherence to anti-gambling norms. This could be achieved through community workshops, sermons, and public declarations against gambling.

C. Economic Support and Rehabilitation

1) Developing Financial Counseling and Debt Relief Programs:

Many individuals affected by online gambling fall into severe debt. Developing targeted financial counseling and debt relief programs could help these individuals regain financial stability. These programs could be run by local governments in collaboration with financial institutions and NGOs, providing support in debt management, budgeting, and financial planning.

2) Expanding Gambling Addiction Rehabilitation Services:

Rehabilitation services should be expanded and made more accessible, particularly in areas with high rates of online gambling. These services should offer comprehensive care, including psychological counseling, addiction treatment, and social support. Mobile clinics and telehealth options could be considered to reach remote communities.

3) Promoting Economic Empowerment Initiatives:

Economic empowerment initiatives, such as vocational training and microfinance programs, can provide alternative income sources, reducing the economic desperation that drives individuals to gamble. These initiatives should target vulnerable groups, including the unemployed and those with low incomes, offering skills development and financial assistance to start small businesses.

D) Community-Based Interventions

1) Establishing Community Support Networks:

Community support networks can provide a safety net for individuals and families affected by online gambling. These networks should offer peer counseling, financial literacy workshops, and mental health services. Community centers or local NGOs can act as hubs for these activities, ensuring they are accessible to all community members.

2) Implementing Peer Education Programs:

Peer education programs, particularly targeting youth, can effectively spread awareness about the risks of online gambling. Young leaders within the community can be trained to educate their peers, creating a ripple effect that fosters a culture of prevention.

3) Encouraging Anonymous Reporting Mechanisms:

To improve law enforcement's ability to combat online gambling, communities should be encouraged to report gambling activities through anonymous reporting systems. Implementing a secure, confidential, and user-friendly platform for reporting could increase community involvement without fear of retaliation.

E. International Cooperation

1) Strengthening International Legal Collaboration:

To combat cross-border online gambling operations, Indonesia should enhance its international legal cooperation. This could involve entering into bilateral agreements with countries hosting gambling platforms and participating in global cybercrime prevention initiatives. Interpol and other international bodies can provide resources and intelligence to support these efforts.

2) Investing in Advanced Surveillance Technologies:

The government should invest in advanced surveillance technologies such as AI-powered monitoring systems, blockchain tracking tools, and enhanced data analytics platforms to detect and disrupt illegal online gambling activities. These tools would enable more effective monitoring of online transactions and the identification of suspicious patterns indicative of gambling.

5. CONCLUSION

This study has provided a comprehensive examination of the multifaceted impacts of online gambling in Indonesia, focusing on social, economic, and legal dimensions. Through the analysis of six key research studies and in-depth interviews with stakeholders, several critical insights have emerged, underscoring the urgency of addressing online gambling as a serious public concern.

Socially, online gambling has been shown to severely disrupt the mental health of individuals, particularly among vulnerable groups such as teenagers and family leaders. The research highlighted significant increases in stress, anxiety, and depression, alongside the erosion of family harmony due to gambling-related conflicts. These issues not only affect individual well-being but also contribute to broader social disintegration within communities.

Economically, the findings reveal that online gambling has devastating effects on the financial stability of families, leading to debt accumulation, loss of assets, and in some cases, criminal behavior driven by the need to recover gambling losses. These economic challenges extend beyond individual households, threatening the overall economic resilience of affected communities.

Legally, the enforcement of gambling laws in Indonesia faces substantial challenges. The current legal framework is often inadequate to address the complexities of online gambling, particularly in the digital era where cross-border operations and technological advancements outpace regulatory capabilities. The lack of public awareness about the legal consequences of online gambling further complicates enforcement efforts.

To address these challenges, this study has proposed a set of comprehensive policy recommendations. These include strengthening the legal framework and law enforcement capabilities, enhancing public education and awareness, providing economic support and rehabilitation services, implementing community-based interventions, and fostering international cooperation to combat cross-border online gambling.

In conclusion, the pervasive impact of online gambling in Indonesia demands a coordinated and multifaceted response from all stakeholders, including the government, law enforcement agencies, communities, and the public. By implementing the proposed policy measures, Indonesia can mitigate the negative effects of online gambling, protect vulnerable populations, and promote a healthier, more resilient society.

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