

“Makassar World City”: Regional Development Orientation in the Discourse of Populism

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Abstract

This research aims to explore and analyze the impact of populist discourse on regional development orientation in Makassar, particularly in the context of efforts to achieve the vision of "Makassar as a World City." Using a phenomenological approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with various stakeholders, text analysis of regional planning documents, and field observations. The results of the study indicate that populist policies often emphasize short-term gains, such as rapid infrastructure development and social welfare programs. However, they face long-term sustainability challenges, unequal distribution of benefits, and a lack of transparency in the use of public funds.

Keywords:

populist policies; regional development; local politics

Introduction

The city of Makassar, in the past, played an important role in the global trade network and was a crucial point for cultural and religious exchange. (Hamid, 2022). Currently, the city of Makassar has transformed into one of the largest cities in Indonesia and has directed its vision to become a world-class city. This vision encompasses public services with global standards that are safe, comfortable, and highly competitive (Herianto et al., 2023). The city has strong international connectivity, facilitating the flow of people, goods, services, and finance within the global network (Sebayang & Sebayang, 2020). Superior infrastructure has been established to improve the welfare of Makassar's residents and various aspects of development aimed at enhancing global competitiveness, strengthening infrastructure, and advancing the local economy (Akil, 2017). However, in the process of achieving this vision, populist discourse often emerges as part of political strategy, especially due to the effects of regional head elections as a consequence of regional autonomy. Populism, with its simple yet emotional appeal, is frequently used by regional heads who are political officials to gain mass support. (Böhmelt & Ezrow, 2023; Raharusun, 2018) Populism in local politics often emphasizes populist policies, which may not always align or are designed, so to speak, in phrases, jargon, or terms to appear aligned with long-term development planning. Populist policies tend to focus on short-term benefits and popularity without considering the long-term impacts on urban development. (Carpenter, 2023; Casanueva Baptista & Sanchez-Urribarri, 2021; Fitzi, 2022; Kroll & Zipperer, 2020). In Makassar, this phenomenon

can be observed through various programs and policies promoted by the local government, which emphasize populist aspects more than comprehensive strategic planning.

From initial observations, there appears to be tension between the orientation towards becoming a city with global public management standards and the implementation of populist policies in the direction of "Makassar as a World City," which seems to focus more on electoral needs than sustainable development. Therefore, this research aims to explore and analyze how populist discourse impacts the regional development orientation in Makassar. The main question to be answered is how policies from populist programs implemented in Makassar align with the city's efforts to achieve world city status with global public management standards.

Literature Review

Populism and public policy

Political populism has become a significant subject of research in modern public policy and political science. Theoretically, populism is often defined as a political strategy that emphasizes the separation between the "elite" and the "people" as a central element in its rhetoric and practices (Brewer, 2016; Casanueva Baptista & Sanchez-Urribarri, 2021; Fitzi, 2022; Scoones et al., 2018). Casanueva Baptista & Sanchez-Urribarri, (2021) dan Fitzi, 2022), Populism can be identified through its emphasis on popular sovereignty, opposition to perceived corrupt or uncaring political elites, and rhetoric that is often simple and emotional. This can explain how populism influences political dynamics in public policy-making. (Dussauge-Laguna, 2022; Taş, 2022; Wajner, 2021). Therefore, populist policies provide a platform for political elites to steer public sentiment towards their assessment of government performance. (Dussauge-Laguna, 2022; Lee, 2004; Wajner, 2021)

Empirically, studies have revealed a variety of impacts of populism on public policy. Ausserladscheider, (2024); Feldmann & Popa, (2022); Monteiro & Fonseca, (2012); Yakir et al., (2024). indicate that populism can lead to larger economic redistribution policies, albeit often at high efficiency costs. They highlight that populism tends to prioritize the immediate interests of the people or specific groups, without considering the long-term implications or impacts on national economic stability. These findings support the argument that populism often focuses on immediate needs and political popularity rather than broader considerations of policy sustainability. (Abelson & Rastrick, 2021)

However, not all studies agree that populism is always detrimental in the context of public policy. (Ben-Porat et al., 2023; De Cleen, 2018; Kovacs, 2022) indicates that populism can sometimes provide impetus for democratic reforms or more inclusive policy changes. This suggests that populism can expand political participation opportunities for groups that were

previously marginalized or overlooked by traditional political elites. (Boroumand, 2017; Marwah, 2019; Rangel Torrijo, 2015)

Populism and Policy Adoption And Policies Change

To understand policy adoption and policy change in the context of populism, it's important to consider how the characteristics of populism influence the public policy process. (Abelson & Rastrick, 2021; Feldmann & Popa, 2022; Taş, 2022; Wajner, 2021). Populist thinkers highlight that populism often emerges as a response to dissatisfaction with political elites and demands for greater popular sovereignty. (Anselmi, 2017; Fitzi et al., 2018; Oswald, 2021; Venizelos, 2023). In this context, populism tends to adopt policies that promise quick and direct responses to perceived social or economic issues faced by the majority of the population. (Haustein & Tomalin, 2021; Knight, 2001)

Empirical studies indicate that the adoption of populist policies often goes hand in hand with an opportunistic approach to existing policies, without considering consistency or alignment with broader policy principles. (Anselmi, 2017; Kroll & Zipperer, 2020; Venizelos, 2023). Examples of the implementation of populist policies in various countries, as analyzed by Carpenter (2023) dan Kroll & Zipperer (2020), show that these policies are often chosen more for their political popularity rather than their long-term sustainability or effectiveness. This is especially due to electoral interests behind such populism. (Bulut & Hacıoğlu, 2021; Caiani & Graziano, 2022; Fitzi et al., 2018; Haustein & Tomalin, 2021)

However, the adoption of populist policies can also bring about significant structural changes in public policy. (Gbadegesin et al., 2022; Lax & Phillips, 2009; Lestari et al., 2022). As analyzed by Yu, (2022), demonstrate how populism, as a departure from orthodox bureaucratic norms, can influence the performance of political officials' ideas in policy experiments that can change decision-making paradigms and bureaucratic structures. Studies like these highlight that, despite often being controversial, populist policies can play a crucial role in addressing social inequalities and improving access to public services for disadvantaged communities (Feldmann & Popa, 2022; Lucas Casanova et al., 2021; Monteiro & Fonseca, 2012). However, policy changes in the populist context can also face challenges in maintaining consistency and sustainability. (Abid Ghafoor Chaudhry et al., 2014; Haustein & Tomalin, 2021; Kroll & Zipperer, 2020)

Analysis of cases in developing countries shows that political fluctuations related to populism can lead to policy uncertainty. (Duley & Gai, 2022) and can undermine economic stability and investor confidence. (Carballo Perez & Corina, 2024; Johnston, 2024). This emphasizes the need for a balance between direct responses to popular demands and considerations of the long-term implications of public policies (Lax & Phillips, 2009). Although populist policies often offer quick solutions to pressing issues, careful evaluation is needed to

understand their long-term impacts on the political and economic stability of a country. (Feldmann & Popa, 2022; Lucas Casanova et al., 2021)

Populismt policies and bureaucratic capacity

Populist policies have significant impacts on the bureaucratic capacity in public administration (Berg-Schlosser et al., 2020; Mukherji & Jha, 2017). Although populist policies can win political support in the short term, they often damage the institutional structure of bureaucracy and reduce its ability to deliver effective and sustainable services to the public. (Holtz-Bacha, 2021; Peters & Pierre, 2022; Simon & Moltz, 2022; Ventriss et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2022). Populist policies often attract attention in modern political contexts due to their strong focus on meeting immediate demands from constituents, often through measures that do not deeply consider the long-term implications for bureaucratic capacity. (Holtz-Bacha, 2021; Simon & Moltz, 2022). Baekgaard et al., (2018) dan Sgueo, (2018) Looking at how populist policies tend to exploit bureaucracy to support short-term political agendas without considering the long-term impacts on public administration. This often leads to decreased efficiency and responsiveness of the bureaucracy to the overall needs of the community.

In the context of Indonesia, populist policies as a result of regional head elections have led to a decline in the quality of bureaucracy (Mu'adi, 2016; Noer, 2024; Zuhro, 2021a, 2021b). Various findings indicate that pressure to fulfill populist promises often leads to neglect of strict administrative procedures, which in turn affects the bureaucracy's ability to deliver effective and sustainable services (Dwijayanti, 2021; Purna & Didin, 2022). These findings are supported by studies conducted by highlight that populist policies can lead to the replacement of competent career officials with those who are politically oriented, ultimately undermining the institutional capacity of the bureaucracy. Analysis by Yakir et al., (2024) emphasizes that populist policies often create a dilemma between immediate political responsiveness and long-term administrative capacity. This perspective reflects the challenges faced by the bureaucracy in maintaining its independence and effectiveness in managing public resources optimally. Brewer, (2016) highlights that populist policies can place additional pressure on the bureaucracy to operate under politically unstable conditions, resulting in decreased motivation and commitment from public officials crucial for maintaining bureaucratic capacity. (Mu'adi, 2016)

Methods

The phenomenological approach is used to examine the influence of populist discourse on the regional development orientation in Makassar, focusing on subjective experiences and individual perceptions of this phenomenon. The research will begin with data collection through semi-structured interviews with government officials, politicians, academics, and residents of

Makassar to highlight their experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of populist policies and their impact on urban development, particularly in the context of political vision formulation during campaigns and governance after being elected. Additionally, textual analysis of Short-Term and Medium-Term Development Plans derived from the mayor and vice mayor's vision and mission statements is conducted to understand how populist discourse is shaped and promoted, focusing on language use and rhetoric in describing populist policies and development goals. Field observations are also conducted at various locations in Makassar to directly observe the implementation of populist policies and experience their impact on society and the urban environment. This process is followed by reflection and interpretation, using a reflective approach to understand the meaning behind the collected experiences and perceptions. To enhance the validity of findings, data from various sources are triangulated, combining interviews, textual analysis, and field observations to provide a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the influence of populist discourse on Makassar's development.

Result and Discussion

Populism policy typology

The typology of populist policies includes various approaches often used by leaders to gain political support by appealing to the emotions and immediate interests of the public. These include fast infrastructure projects promising quick results but sometimes lacking sustainability, social welfare programs that enhance short-term welfare but may face challenges in equitable distribution, symbolic projects to enhance city image and identity without always considering sustainability, direct subsidies to reduce living burdens but potentially creating long-term dependency, and claim-based policies to garner political support with risks of transparency and effectiveness in public fund utilization.

Table 1.

Populist Policies in the Makassar World City Program

Populist Policies	Numbers
Quick Infrastructure	2
Social Welfare Programs	3
Symbolic Projects	2
Subsidies and Direct Aid	7
Claim-Based Project Policies	4

Source, primary data processed 2024

The typology of populist policies can be seen through various types of programs aimed at attracting mass support and enhancing political popularity. Fast Infrastructure includes projects such as Maka verse, Sombere smart city, Makassar Cor City, smart panyingkulu, and Japparate,

emphasizing city modernization with fast and integrated infrastructure. Social Welfare Programs encompass initiatives like Makassar tidak rantasa, Lorong garden, Lorong sehat, and Lorong wisata, aiming to improve social welfare and residents' quality of life. Symbolic Projects include Festival f8, Low carbon city, City Branding, and enhancements to monthly festivals and MICE, used to enhance the city's image and identity. Direct Subsidies and Assistance include programs like Smart incubator, offering direct aid to specific sectors. Claim-Based Project Policies, such as Smart RTRW, demonstrate a tendency to claim success or innovation in city governance to attract public attention and support.

Table 2.
Analysis of findings

Populist Policies	Finding	Analysis
Quick Infrastructure	There is an increase in accessibility and mobility in the city, but there is a risk of inefficient use of funds.	Rapid infrastructure development often prioritizes quick results without considering long-term sustainability.
Social Welfare Programs	Improving the welfare of a number of residents, but there are challenges in equitable and sustainable distribution.	These programs can increase political support, but require careful management to prevent inappropriate distribution.
Symbolic Projects	Improving the city's image and boosting tourism, but the adoption is often unsustainable after the event ends.	Symbolic projects can increase local pride and attract investment, but require planning to maintain a long-term positive impact.
Subsidies and Direct Aid	Reducing the burden of life for some citizens, but the risk of long-term dependence on government assistance.	Subsidies and direct assistance can provide direct benefits but need to consider their impact on the community's economic independence.
Claim-Based Project Policies	Increasing political base supporters, but the risk of implementing projects that are less transparent and effective.	These policies can increase a leader's popularity, but require close monitoring to ensure efficient and transparent use of funds.

Source: primary data processed 2024

The table above shows the various impacts and implications of various types of populist policies that are often implemented in the context of urban development. Rapid Infrastructure, such as the construction of roads and other transport facilities, has improved accessibility and mobility in the city, although risks related to inefficient use of funds are a concern. Social Welfare Programs, such as social assistance and health programs, provide direct benefits in improving the welfare of a number of citizens, but challenges in equitable and sustainable distribution require careful management. Symbolic projects, such as large festivals and flashy infrastructure projects, are effective in improving a city's image and tourism, but often face challenges in maintaining sustainability after the event ends. Subsidies and Direct Assistance, such as price subsidy programs or direct assistance to specific individuals or sectors, provide immediate assistance but pose the risk of long-term dependence on government assistance. While Claims-Based Project

Policies, which often highlight successes or innovations in government, can increase political support but require close monitoring to ensure transparency and effective use of public funds.

The rhetoric of populism in programs and policies

Populist rhetoric and the policies they promote often utilize simple and emotional language to attract the attention and support of the masses. This rhetoric tends to highlight narratives that divide society into “us” versus “them,” offering seemingly easy and quick solutions to complex problems. Populist policies often promise policies such as massive subsidies, tax abolition, or large social programs with the aim of winning political support from the majority of society. In Makassar's connection to the world city. This rhetoric can be seen through the following table.

Table 3.

The rhetoric of populism in programs and policies

Rethorics	Finding
Economic Progress	This rhetoric was used to emphasize the expected economic benefits of the project, attracting support from employers and workers.
International Tourism	Attract support from the tourism sector and communities involved in the tourism industry through the promise of increasing the number of tourists.
Modern Infrastructure	Emphasizing physical development such as roads, bridges and modern public facilities to create the impression of progress and modernization.
Local Pride	Using local sentiment to increase the sense of local pride and identity among the people of Makassar.
Social Equality	Using the rhetoric of social inclusion to ensure that development is considered fair and equitable for all levels of society.
Education and Health	Attract support from the education and health sectors with the promise of improving the quality of public services.
Technology and Innovation	Emphasizing the importance of technology and innovation to modernize cities and attracting support from the tech and startup communities.
Environment	Attracting support from environmental groups with promises of sustainable and environmentally friendly development.

Source: primary data processed 2024

The table outlines the various rhetorical strategies used in the Makassar development context. These include an emphasis on economic progress to attract support from local entrepreneurs and workers, promotion of international tourism with the promise of increased tourist numbers, a focus on modern infrastructure to create the impression of progress, and leveraging local pride to strengthen community support. In addition, social inclusion strategies are used to ensure equality in development benefits, while education and health are emphasized to improve public services. Technology and innovation are considered important in modernizing cities, while a commitment to the environment attracts the attention of environmental groups with the promise of sustainable and environmentally friendly development.

Impact on Social and Economic Dimensions

The social impact of populist policies shows complex and varied effects on society. While they often provide immediate benefits such as temporary improvements in well-being for vulnerable groups and increased access to public services, these policies can also create long-term challenges. Examples include economic uncertainty due to inconsistent policies, the risk of society becoming dependent on government assistance, as well as unequal social impacts among various societal groups.

Table 4.
Impact on Social and Economic Dimensions

Community Groups	Social Impact Indicators	Findings
Low Income Communities	Increased welfare, access to basic services	Populist policies improve short-term welfare but are often less economically sustainable.
Middle class	Satisfaction with public services, economic opportunities	Populist policies add temporary economic opportunities but sometimes create economic uncertainty.
Small and Medium Entrepreneurs (SMEs)	Access to markets and capital, business stability	Populist policies help SMEs in the short term but are often not supported by stable long-term policies.
Women's Group	Gender equality, access to economic and educational opportunities	Populist policies improve gender equality in some aspects, but many challenges remain.
Disability Group	Accessibility to public services, employment opportunities	Populist policies improve the accessibility of public services, but employment opportunities remain very limited.

Source: primary data processed 2024

The table presents the impact of populist policies on various community groups in Makassar. For low-income communities, these policies result in short-term improvements in well-being and access to basic services, although they are often less economically sustainable in the long term. The middle class experiences increased satisfaction with public services and additional economic opportunities, but populist policies sometimes create economic uncertainty. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) gain access to markets and capital through these policies, but are often not supported by stable long-term policies, threatening the stability of their businesses. For women's groups, populist policies focus on improving gender equality and access to economic and educational opportunities, although they still face challenges in effective implementation. Disability groups also experience improved accessibility to public services through this policy, but employment opportunities for them are still very limited.

Impact on Institutional and Administrative Dimensions

Public administrative capacity plays a crucial role in the implementation of populist policies, which often require rapid and effective responses to public demands or political pressure. A strong public administration is able to manage frequent policy changes and ensure efficient and transparent use of resources. However, challenges arise when administrative

capacity is limited in planning, monitoring and evaluating populist policies as a whole. This can result in the risk of inappropriate decision making, uneven distribution, and difficulties in maintaining long-term policy consistency.

Table 5.

Institutional and Administrative Dimensions

Institutional Dimension	Findings
Bureaucratic Efficiency	Decreased efficiency in the decision-making process due to high political pressure.
Quality of Public Services	Reduction in the quality of public services due to reduced focus on administrative standards.
Recruitment and Cadre Generation	Increased recruitment of politically oriented officials rather than technical competence.
Employee Motivation	Reduced motivation and commitment of public employees due to an unstable work environment.

Source: primary data processed 2024

The table identifies the impact of populist policies on various aspects of management and bureaucratic quality in Makassar. Bureaucratic efficiency has decreased due to high political pressure which influences the decision-making process. The quality of public services is also affected by a reduced focus on administrative standards, reducing the effectiveness and reliability of services provided to the public. In addition, recruitment and cadre formation in the bureaucracy tends to be more influenced by political considerations than technical competence, potentially reducing the professionalism and capacity of public institutions. The motivation and commitment of public employees is also in danger of being reduced due to an unstable work environment, affecting productivity and effectiveness in carrying out administrative tasks and public services.

Bureaucratic capacity

Bureaucratic capacity plays a crucial role in the implementation of populist policies, which often require rapid responses and efficient decision making. A strong and effective bureaucracy is able to manage political pressure and ensure that the policies implemented do not only meet momentary political interests, but are also sustainable in the long term. However, challenges that often arise are limitations in trained and qualified human resources, as well as the ability to adapt to policy changes that are often rapid and not well coordinated between departments. This raises the risk of low efficiency, reduced quality of public services, and the potential for abuse of power or corruption in the implementation of populist policies.

Table 6.

Impact on Bureaucratic capacity

Capacity Dimension	Information	Findings
Human Resources	Availability of qualified and experienced staff	Lack of adequately trained personnel to manage populist policies, risk of burnout or work overload
Organizational Capacity	Organizational skills and abilities in planning and implementing policies	Limited ability to plan and implement complex policies such as massive infrastructure
Infrastructure and Technology	Availability of physical and technological infrastructure that supports policy implementation	Infrastructure limitations that can hinder monitoring and implementation of policies, technological challenges in data management and reporting
Financial Capacity	Ability to manage and allocate financial resources	Limited budget to support the implementation of populist policies, risk of budget deficits and increasing government debt
Monitoring and Evaluation Capabilities	Effective monitoring and evaluation system	Limitations in monitoring and evaluating the use of public funds, risk of misuse or corruption
Political and Institutional Commitment	Political support and policy sustainability	Political instability can disrupt the implementation of populist policies, lacking institutional support for structural reforms
Learning and Innovation Capacity	Ability to learn from experience and innovate in policy implementation	Lack of adaptation to changing conditions or needs, risk of stagnation in innovation and learning from previous policies

Source: primary data processed 2024

This table records various categories of data on challenges in implementing populist policies in Makassar. Limited trained human resources are one of the main obstacles, with a shortage of qualified and experienced personnel resulting in the risk of burnout or work overload in managing populist policies. Additionally, organizational capacity to plan and implement complex policies such as massive infrastructure is limited, hampering the ability to effectively implement these programs. Inadequate infrastructure and technology is also a serious problem, with limitations in physical infrastructure and technological challenges in data management and reporting can hinder monitoring and policy implementation. Regarding finances, a limited budget to support populist policies increases the risk of budget deficits and increased government debt, while a less effective monitoring and evaluation system has the potential to exacerbate the risk of misuse or corruption in the use of public funds.

Impact on Policy stability

In the context of populism, policy stability is often disrupted by rapid and frequent policy changes. Populist policies tend to be responsive to changing political pressures, both from internal and external interest groups, as well as in the face of dynamic economic or social

conditions. Changes in leadership are also often the main trigger for policy change, which can result in a lack of continuity in social and economic programs. This creates challenges for long-term policy stability and can affect predictability and consistency in achieving national development goals.

Table 7.
Impact on Policy stability

Data Category	Description	Findings
Frequency of Policy Changes	Rate of policy changes over a specific period of time	Populist policies tend to experience more frequent changes, especially after leadership turnover or in response to political pressures.
Policy Continuity	Consistency of policies across governance periods	Lack of policy continuity can disrupt long-term planning and sustainability of social and economic programs.
Causes of Policy Changes	Factors driving policy changes	Leadership changes, political pressure from interest groups, response to economic or social crises, or new perspectives from new leaders.
Structural Reforms	Efforts towards structural reforms within populist policies	Lack of continuity in structural reforms can hinder overall system improvements.

Source: primary data processed 2024

This table illustrates several data categories related to populist policies, focusing on the frequency of policy changes, policy continuity, causes of policy changes, and efforts towards structural reforms. Firstly, the rate of policy changes over a specific period indicates that populist policies tend to undergo changes more frequently, particularly after leadership turnovers or in response to fluctuating political pressures. Secondly, the lack of policy continuity across governance periods can disrupt long-term planning and the sustainability of social and economic programs, jeopardizing consistency in achieving development goals. Thirdly, factors driving policy changes include leadership changes, political pressure from interest groups, responses to economic or social crises, or new perspectives from new leaders, highlighting the political dynamics influencing the direction of populist policies. Finally, efforts towards structural reforms within populist policies often lack consistency, which can hinder overall system improvements and slow progress towards long-term goals.

Discussion

Populist policies in Makassar show complex impacts on various societal groups. Low-income communities benefit from short-term improvements in welfare and access to basic services. However, the sustainability of their economic conditions is a major concern, with potential long-term negative impacts needing attention. On the other hand, middle-income groups experience increased satisfaction with public services and additional economic opportunities, despite often facing economic uncertainties. Small and medium-sized enterprises

gain access to markets and capital in the short term, but their long-term stability is frequently threatened.

In terms of institutional and administrative aspects, implementing populist policies requires a strong capacity within public administration to manage and execute them efficiently and transparently. Major challenges include high political pressure, sometimes inadequate decision-making, and decreased quality of public services due to potentially insufficient administrative standards. Improvements in organizational management and capacity are crucial to supporting more effective and sustainable policy implementation.

Overall, populist policies in Makassar exhibit an unstable pattern due to frequent changes in response to dynamic political dynamics and leadership turnovers. This presents challenges in achieving predictability and consistency in development goals. Despite efforts at structural reform, maintaining policy implementation consistency remains a significant issue.

This can be explained through the lens of Policy Stability, highlighting that populist policies tend to be unstable due to changing responses to dynamic political pressures and leadership changes. Lack of continuity between government periods or as a result of high-level bureaucratic turnover due to rotations or mutations can disrupt long-term planning and program sustainability. Meanwhile, a strong capacity within public administration is crucial for managing populist policies. However, bureaucracy is often burdened by high political pressure, leading to inefficient or improper decision-making, and decreased quality of public services due to inadequate administrative standards.

On one hand, populist policies often emphasize symbolic projects and infrastructure without considering sustainable development principles. A better balance between rapid economic development and environmental sustainability is needed to ensure long-term benefits for society. On the other hand, emphasis on social welfare values poses challenges for equitable distribution that often arise. The middle class may experience increased satisfaction with public services and additional economic opportunities, despite economic uncertainties. Effective implementation also faces barriers in achieving gender equality and accessibility to public services, significantly impacting economic growth in Makassar. Accelerated infrastructure can enhance accessibility and connectivity but often faces challenges in resource efficiency. Social welfare programs can expedite wealth distribution but struggle to accurately reach those in need.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Populist policies in development orientation often provide significant immediate benefits to certain segments of society, such as rapid infrastructure and direct social assistance. However, they are also vulnerable to long-term challenges, such as dependence on external funding, risks

of unsustainable unplanned development, and lack of transparency in public fund management. Moreover, focusing on symbolic projects or politically claim-based projects can sideline the needs for sustainable development and social benefit distribution, leading to greater societal inequalities. Therefore, while populist policies can yield political and economic gains in the short term, they require careful planning and strict oversight to ensure they support sustainable and inclusive development in the long term.

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