MORFAI JOURNAL Multidiciplinary Output Research For Actual and International Issue
Multidisciplinary Output Research For Actual and International Issue (MORFAI Journal) ISSN (e): 2808-6635
Volumes 6 No. 6 (2026)

LEADERSHIP STYLE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NORTH MOROWALI REGIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (DPRD)

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Received:05/09/2026 | **Revised** : 12/09/2026 | **Accepted:** 30/09/2026 | **Published:** 12/11/2026

Abstract

The Chairman of a regional legislature (DPRD) leads a collegial and politically plural institution, so leadership style should be read through behavior in concrete situations rather than through a single label. This study describes and analyzes the leadership style of the Chairman of the North Morowali DPRD in terms of authoritarian, democratic, transactional, transformational, and situational tendencies. A descriptive qualitative design was used. Data were obtained from semi-structured interviews with six informants (three non-structural secretariat staff, the Secretary of the DPRD, and two council members from different factions) held on 31 August–4 September 2026, complemented by organizational documents, and analyzed with the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive model using source and technique triangulation. The Chairman is perceived to understand and perform the roles of formal leader, coordinator, communicator, and institutional representative. Communication is open and combines formal and informal channels, important decisions are placed in deliberation, and disagreements are handled through dialogue and mediation. The dominant style is situational, centered on democratic processes and reinforced by transformational behavior, while authoritarian and transactional elements remain limited. Effectiveness is supported by experience and secretariat support but constrained by agenda density, political dynamics, and inconsistent follow-up.

Keywords: Democratic leadership; DPRD chairman; Leadership style; Situational leadership; Transformational leadership

INTRODUCTION

Under regional autonomy, the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) is an element of regional government alongside the regional administration. It performs legislative, budgeting, and oversight functions, so the quality of its internal processes influences the quality of regional governance (Republik Indonesia, 2014, 2018). Law No. 23 of 2014 and Government Regulation No. 12 of 2018 place the DPRD leadership in a collective-collegial forum: it coordinates institutional work, chairs meetings, and exercises authority according to standing orders. Leadership of the DPRD Chairman must therefore be understood in the relationship between formal authority, deliberation, and administrative support.

The leadership style of the Chairman matters because the way a leader communicates, makes decisions, and manages conflict shapes relations with council members and the secretariat. Evidence from the public sector shows that the relationship between leadership and organizational outcomes depends on style and administrative context; style should thus be identified from behavior in concrete situations rather than from labels that stand alone (Backhaus & Vogel, 2022). The literature distinguishes authoritarian, democratic, transactional, transformational, and situational tendencies, which in public organizations may appear in combination because leaders face formal rules, organizational goals, interpersonal relations, and changing circumstances (Backhaus & Vogel, 2022; Republik Indonesia, 2018).

The DPRD of North Morowali Regency for 2024–2029 has 25 members from eight political parties. Golkar holds seven seats, the largest share, but not an absolute majority, so institutional decisions still require interaction and acceptance across political positions (KPU Kabupaten Morowali Utara, 2024). This configuration places the Chairman in an arena of plural interests. Relational perspectives add that collective action is directed through relationships, learning, and feedback rather than centralized control alone (Kinder et al., 2021).

Normatively, DPRD leadership is exercised within collective-collegial rules and a division of authority; empirically, it depends on how the leadership links formal rules with communication, deliberation, conflict management, and administrative coordination. Existing studies tend to examine the influence of leadership on performance, whereas fewer describe in depth how the Chairman's leadership is practiced in daily political and administrative relations. This study addresses that gap by asking how the Chairman of the North Morowali DPRD exercises leadership in terms of authoritarian, democratic, transactional, transformational, and situational tendencies in performing institutional functions.

The study pursues three objectives: to explore how the Chairman understands and performs the leadership role; to identify patterns of communication, decision-making, and conflict management toward members and the secretariat; and to analyze factors that support or hinder the effectiveness of this leadership in the political and institutional context of the region. Theoretically, it contributes a qualitative perspective on public-sector leadership in regional legislatures; practically, it offers material for reflection to DPRD leaders, members, and the secretariat.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Studies

Leadership in local public institutions has been examined in several settings. Garis et al. (2021) found that a village head in Pangandaran applied democratic leadership fairly consistently, listening to criticism, accepting suggestions, and involving residents in decisions. Anggasta and Haji (2024) studied the Chairman of the Surakarta DPRD and showed that democratic leadership appeared through member involvement, motivation, work evaluation, management of disagreement, and proportional reprimand. Setiawan et al. (2024), examining the Chairman of the Ciamis DPRD for 2019–2024 from the perspective of political resilience, stressed accountability, resource optimization, organizational stability, and the management of public aspirations. Masduki (2022) linked intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence to the performance of DPRD members in Majalengka.

At a broader level, Backhaus and Vogel (2022) meta-analyzed 151 studies with 486 effect sizes and concluded that leadership correlates positively with beneficial outcomes, although the strength of the relationship varies by style, administrative tradition, administrative subfield, and research method. Kinder et al. (2021) showed that in collaborative governance, collective action is guided through relationships, learning, feedback, and collective awareness, not only by a central controller. Together these studies suggest that public leadership should be read contextually and relationally.

Leadership Styles in the Public Sector

Leadership is commonly defined as the ability to influence and mobilize others to work toward organizational goals (Northouse, 2021). Leadership style refers to a relatively consistent pattern of behavior shown when interacting with subordinates, making decisions, and managing the organization (Backhaus & Vogel, 2022). Weber distinguished traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational authority, the last being most relevant for the formal legitimacy of a DPRD Chairman (Yukl & Gardner, 2020). Authoritarian leadership centers decisions on the leader with minimal involvement of others, democratic leadership emphasizes deliberation and member participation, and laissez-faire leadership leaves control of tasks to subordinates (Northouse, 2021). Transactional leadership links targets, rewards, and consequences, whereas transformational leadership stresses idealized influence, motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual attention; in public organizations both can coexist with other behaviors, so the strength of each dimension must be judged from consistent patterns of evidence (Backhaus & Vogel, 2022).

Leadership in the Regional Legislature

The DPRD leadership consists of a Chairman and Deputy Chairs, while members work through committees, the deliberative body, and the budget body. The Chairman holds formal authority to chair plenary meetings, set the session schedule together with the deliberative body, sign council decisions, and represent the institution before the regional government and external parties; the position also has a symbolic dimension that shapes public trust in the DPRD (Republik Indonesia, 2018). Because leadership takes place in collegial, political, and administrative relations, coordination effectiveness depends not only on formal position but also on the quality of relationships, learning, and feedback among actors (Kinder et al., 2021). What remains thinly documented is how this configuration of styles is practiced and perceived day to day by those who interact directly with the Chairman, which this study seeks to fill.

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METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach because its aim is to understand and describe in depth the leadership style of the Chairman of the North Morowali DPRD from the experiences and interpretations of actors in the institution, not to test hypotheses or measure numerical relationships (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Miles et al., 2020). The research was conducted at the DPRD and the DPRD Secretariat of North Morowali Regency, Central Sulawesi, selected purposively because the institution and its Chairman are the focus of the inquiry.

Informants were selected purposively according to knowledge, experience, intensity of interaction, and institutional position. The Chairman was positioned as the subject whose style is examined, not as a primary informant, to reduce self-assessment and normative answers. Six informants were interviewed between 31 August and 4 September 2026 (Table 1): three non-structural secretariat employees (IN-1A, IN-1B, IN-1C), the Secretary of the DPRD (IN-2), and two council members, one from the Chairman's faction (IN-3A) and one from a different faction (IN-3B). Adequacy was judged by relevance, depth of experience, and the ability of the data to explain the research focus, not by statistical generalization.

Table 1. Characteristics of informants

Code	Position	Length of service	Interview date
IN-1A	Junior Planner, DPRD Secretariat	12 years	1 Sep 2026
IN-1B	Junior Policy Analyst, DPRD Secretariat	1 year 3 months	2 Sep 2026
IN-1C	Associate Legislative Drafter, DPRD Secretariat	12 years	31 Aug 2026
IN-2	Secretary of the DPRD	4 years	31 Aug 2026
IN-3A	DPRD member, Golkar Faction (Chairman's faction)	Two terms	3 Sep 2026
IN-3B	DPRD member, Indonesia Sejahtera Faction (different faction)	One term	4 Sep 2026

Source: Interview data and informant identity documents, 2026.

Data were collected mainly through semi-structured in-depth interviews guided by questions on the Chairman's role, meeting leadership, communication, decision-making, conflict handling, appreciation, motivation, and supporting and inhibiting factors. Interviews were conducted face to face at the DPRD offices and recorded with consent. Documentation of the secretariat's organizational structure, 2026 job map, job analysis, workload analysis, and job evaluation, as well as regulations on the DPRD, supplemented the interviews and served to test the plausibility of the institutional context. The researcher was the main instrument, supported by interview and observation guides and field notes. Informant statements quoted below were translated from Indonesian by the authors.

Analysis followed the interactive model of Miles et al. (2020): data condensation through coding by theme, data display in matrices and narratives, and conclusion drawing and verification. Leadership styles were not assigned from informants' labels alone; they were inferred from repeated behavior, the context in which it appeared, variation between sources, and document support. Trustworthiness was strengthened through triangulation of sources (secretariat staff, Secretary, and members of the same and a different faction) and of techniques (interviews compared with documents), retention of negative cases, member checking, and an audit trail (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Miles et al., 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Institutional Context

The DPRD of North Morowali for 2024–2029 consists of 25 members: Golkar holds seven seats, Hanura five, NasDem and Demokrat three each, and Gerindra, PDI Perjuangan, and PKB two each, with one seat for PKS (KPU Kabupaten Morowali Utara, 2024). The plural composition makes cross-faction communication and conflict management a routine part of leadership. The Chairman comes from the largest party, yet decisions still involve the leadership, committees, other factions, and the regional government (Republik Indonesia, 2018).

The Secretariat is led by the Secretary of the DPRD and has three divisions: General Affairs and Finance, Sessions and Legislation, and Facilitation of Budgeting and Oversight. The 2026 job map records 74 filled positions against 83 required; leadership, administrator, and supervisory positions are complete, while gaps of three functional and six implementing positions remain (Sekretariat DPRD Kabupaten Morowali Utara, 2026). The gap does not by itself prove weak performance, but it shows that administrative support operates with personnel capacity below the mapped need.

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Understanding of the Leadership Role

Across informants, the Chairman is perceived to understand the position not merely as a formal office but as the one who directs institutional activity, coordinates council elements, upholds the standing orders, and represents the institution. IN-1A stated that the Chairman "understands and carries out the role as leader by always being guided by the DPRD standing orders and statutory regulations." The most prominent daily task is coordination: IN-1B described it as arranging institutional agendas, coordinating with leaders and members, communicating with the regional government, and ensuring that policy deliberations proceed.

Meetings are described by three recurring traits: calm control of the forum, firmness in keeping to procedure, and openness to members' opinions. IN-1A noted that the Chairman "leads meetings calmly and always listens to input before making decisions," while IN-1C emphasized mastery of material and adherence to meeting rules and the code of ethics. The collegial principle was stated explicitly by IN-1C: DPRD leadership is collective-collegial, so important decisions are taken by mutual agreement. Emphases differ by position, with staff highlighting procedure and coordination, the Secretary the liaison function between leaders, members, and secretariat, and members the space for opinion and faction involvement, but these emphases complement rather than contradict each other.

Communication, Decision-Making, and Conflict Management

Communication is perceived as open and direct, with channels adjusted to the issue and the party involved: formal communication through meetings and institutional forums, and informal communication through personal meetings, telephone, or chat to speed up coordination. IN-1A explained that the Chairman meets or invites the relevant party, holds internal meetings, or uses chat media for coordination. Decisions affecting institutional interests are mostly reached through deliberation rather than set unilaterally. IN-1A gave concrete examples, namely scheduling committee and plenary meetings and determining revised and final budgets, and IN-1B said that the Chairman "does not tend to make decisions unilaterally" but prioritizes deliberation and coordination.

Disagreement is treated as a normal part of a legislature. According to IN-1B, the Chairman tends to act as a mediator so that differences do not grow into conflicts that disturb DPRD functions, and IN-1A added that the Chairman listens to all parties and does not decide emotionally. Firmness appears mainly when forums must be returned to the standing orders or an agenda must be completed. Taken together, these accounts indicate firmness that is procedural rather than domineering.

Appreciation, Motivation, and Situational Adjustment

Appreciation is perceived mostly as thanks, recognition of work, and the granting of trust, while information on formal sanctions is limited and refers to existing rules. Some statements mention material gifts: IN-1A reported seeing the Chairman give "pocket money" to secretariat staff after certain tasks. The interviews do not show that this is an official reward scheme, part of a remuneration system, or funded from institutional budgets, so it is recorded as informal, personal appreciation as perceived by informants. Motivation is built by reminding that every DPRD activity must benefit the public (IN-1B) and by trust and role modeling, which IN-2 considered the most effective forms of motivation.

Style adjustment is described consistently. IN-1B called the Chairman "quite adaptive," not using the same approach in every situation but adjusting to the issue, conditions, and parties involved, and IN-1A observed firmness on rules together with involvement of factions on matters of principle. Routine agendas are met with open, informal communication; formal meetings follow the standing orders; differences are managed by deliberation and mediation; and urgent matters are answered with firmness.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Effectiveness is supported by relational factors (communication, coordination, openness, trust), organizational factors (support from members and the Secretariat), and personal factors (experience and understanding of institutional character and local political dynamics). IN-2 named the cooperation of all members, secretariat support, and the Chairman's experience as supporting factors. Inhibiting factors are mainly structural and contextual: changing political dynamics, differences of view among factions, task complexity, agenda density, and limited time. IN-1B stressed that obstacles come more from task complexity and institutional dynamics than from the Chairman personally. Views on local politics varied: IN-1A held that it does not change the way the Chairman leads as long as it does not hamper DPRD functions, while IN-1B thought it has an influence and has made the Chairman more mature in decision-making. These differences were retained rather than harmonized.

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Informants also identified aspects to improve, notably the speed of decisions and consistency in following up meeting results, as IN-1A put it, alongside early communication on strategic agendas. This is a critical case: participatory processes do not automatically produce fast decisions or consistent follow-up. On delegation, IN-2 reported routine consultation in which the Chairman sets agendas and priorities and entrusts technical tasks to the Secretariat, but because this rests largely on one source its triangulation power is limited. On faction accommodation, both IN-3A (same faction) and IN-3B (different faction) acknowledged space for aspirations; IN-3B said that the faction's aspirations were accommodated through institutional and non-institutional channels, the key being a fair opportunity and open deliberation. Accommodation is thus understood as access and consideration, not automatic approval.

Classification of Leadership Style

Findings were mapped to the five styles by examining behavioral consistency, context, source variation, and document support (Table 2).

Table 2. Classification of findings by leadership style

Style	Indicators found	Strength	Interpretation
Authoritarian	Firmness in upholding order, forum discipline, and decisions in certain conditions	Weak	Mainly procedural firmness; no consistent unilateral domination
Democratic	Deliberation, space for opinion, open communication, involvement of factions and secretariat, mediation	Strong	Main pattern of collective processes and decision-making
Transactional	Appreciation, personal gifts, reprimand, emphasis on task compliance	Limited	No formal, measurable reward–sanction system
Transformational	Role modeling, togetherness, motivation, personal attention, orientation to public benefit	Moderate to strong	Strengthens commitment; vision and measurable change not strongly documented
Situational	Approach varies by agenda, conflict, urgency, and parties involved	Strong	Combines deliberation, firmness, formal and informal communication

Source: Thematic analysis of interviews and documents, 2026.

The Chairman's leadership does not appear as a single pure style. The dominant tendency is situational, with democratic processes as its axis and transformational behavior as reinforcement. This rests not on the word "situational" used by informants but on a consistent pattern of change between informal and formal communication, deliberation and firmness, and institutional and personal approaches. The democratic axis prevents flexibility from becoming inconsistency, since deliberation, space to speak, and respect for opinions recur across informant categories. Transformational behavior (role modeling, togetherness, motivation, and personal attention) improves acceptance, yet evidence of an articulated vision for change or measurable organizational transformation is insufficient for it to be the sole label. Authoritarian and transactional elements appear without becoming the main character: firmness controls the forum within the rules, and appreciation sustains motivation without replacing deliberation.

Discussion and Implications

The findings support the view that public-sector leadership does not occur in rigid categories; the typology serves to read behavioral tendencies rather than close off other behaviors (Backhaus & Vogel, 2022). The democratic tendency, visible in cross-faction involvement and the processing of aspirations through institutional mechanisms, is consistent with relational leadership in collaborative governance, in which acceptance is built through relationships, learning, and collective awareness (Kinder et al., 2021). The result also resonates with democratic practice reported for the Surakarta DPRD Chairman (Anggasta & Haji, 2024) and with the political-organizational dimension of the Ciamis DPRD Chairman (Setiawan et al., 2024). Compared with studies that test the association of leadership with performance, this study adds a qualitative explanation of how leadership works in daily practice: formal authority provides the basis, democratic processes build legitimacy, transformational behavior strengthens trust and motivation, and situational adjustment selects the response. Situations in a DPRD are multidimensional, involving members' political mandates, standing orders, faction positions, executive–legislative relations, urgency, and secretariat readiness.

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Interpretation needs caution. Most statements were positive, which may reflect real experience but also politeness, hierarchical relations, or political closeness. Praise from one party was therefore not treated as sole evidence; agreement across the Chairman's faction and a different faction on space for aspirations carries more weight, and criticism about decision speed, follow-up, and agenda density was retained. Claims on material appreciation were read carefully because no regulation, recipient list, or budget evidence was available. Limitations include the small number of informants, the absence of the Chairman, deputy chairs, committee leaders, the executive, and the public as sources, and the lack of meeting minutes, dispositions, and follow-up documents. The conclusion is therefore analytic and contextual to the period and informants studied.

Practically, the Chairman could strengthen follow-up through a decision register with responsible persons, deadlines, and periodic monitoring together with the Secretary. Appreciation should move toward transparent, fair mechanisms with clear criteria, and reprimands should rest on standing orders, the code of ethics, or civil-service rules. The Secretariat can prioritize agenda coordination, decision documentation, and workload prioritization while personnel gaps remain, and factions can pair space for deliberation with data-based arguments and respect for collective decisions.

CONCLUSION

The Chairman of the North Morowali DPRD is perceived to exercise leadership not as one pure style but as a configuration of behaviors that shifts with the agenda, the forum, relations among actors, and political dynamics. The situational tendency is dominant, supported by democratic behavior and some transformational elements; transactional elements are not dominant, because appreciation is interpersonal and not backed by evidence of a formal reward system, and authoritarian elements are better understood as procedural control. The Chairman is seen as formal leader, coordinator, communicator, and representative of the institution, with open communication, deliberative decision-making, and conflict handled through dialogue and mediation. Effectiveness results from the interaction of the Chairman's capacity and institutional conditions: experience, communication, secretariat support, and standing orders on one side, and political dynamics, agenda density, and limited time on the other.

The conclusion is contextual and based on six informants and available documents, not on quantitative performance measurement. Future studies should widen the sources to the Chairman and Deputy Chairs, committee leaders, the executive, and the public; add direct observation of meetings and analysis of minutes and follow-up documents; and compare across DPRDs and types of agenda to test the consistency of the style and its relation to institutional outcomes.

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