

## **The Contribution of Members of the PKB Faction in the Lamongan Regency DPRD to the Collection of Community Aspirations**

**Savira Shofi Yohana**  
UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya

Savirayohana482@gmail.com

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### **Abstrak**

The Regional Representative Council is a representative body at the regional level. It is one of the forms of regional government that has the authority, rights, and obligations to administer its regional government, particularly within its electoral district, to meet the needs of its people. As members of the DPRD, they must also be able to accommodate, absorb and gather the aspirations of the people in their region. The purpose of this study is to analyse the role of Lamongan DPRD members, particularly those from the PKB faction, in absorbing the people's aspirations and to identify the factors that support and hinder the absorption of these aspirations. A qualitative research method was employed, utilising a descriptive approach, which involved collecting data through interviews and observations. The results of this study indicate that the role of PKB faction DPRD members in Lamongan Regency in absorbing community aspirations is carried out through various mechanisms, namely through recesses, working visits, and informal activities. The commitment of Council members and community participation influences the supporting factors. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors indicate budget and time constraints.

**Keywords:** regional representative council, people's aspirations, pkb faction, legislative role, community participation

## Introduction

The Regional Representative Council, often abbreviated as DPRD, is a representative body at the regional level comprising members of political parties elected by the people through general elections held directly every five years (Asshiddiqie, 2010). The DPRD functions as one of the core elements of regional government administration within Indonesia's decentralised political system (Huda, 2014). Furthermore, the functions of the DPRD are explicitly regulated in Law No. 17 of 2014 concerning the People's Consultative Assembly, the House of Representatives, the Regional Representative Council, and Regional People's Representative Councils, which stipulates that the DPRD performs three main functions: legislative, supervisory, and budgetary functions (Republic of Indonesia, 2014).

In order to optimally carry out these three functions, the DPRD is endowed with various authorities, duties, obligations, and rights. As an institution responsible for regional governance, DPRD members are expected to manage regional government affairs in accordance with the needs and interests of their constituents (Syarifuddin, 2016). Consequently, DPRD members must be able to accommodate, absorb, collect, and process public aspirations within their electoral districts. In a democratic system, the articulation of public aspirations constitutes a fundamental basis for public policymaking, as representative institutions serve as a bridge between citizens and the government (Dahl, 1998). However, the effectiveness of aspiration absorption is highly dependent on the active role of DPRD members, particularly in utilising both formal and informal mechanisms to listen to, interpret, and follow up on citizens' demands (Budiardjo, 2008).

In analysing the role of PKB faction DPRD members in Lamongan Regency in absorbing community aspirations, this study employs Soerjono Soekanto's role theory. According to Soekanto (2012), a role is defined as the dynamic aspect of a social status, referring to a set of rights and obligations attached to a particular position. A role manifests when individuals perform actions in accordance with their status, and its implementation is influenced by personal characteristics, social expectations, and situational contexts. Using this theoretical framework, this study examines how PKB faction members of the Lamongan Regency DPRD enact their representative role, the extent to which this role aligns with institutional expectations, and the factors that emerge in its practical implementation.

Several previous studies have examined the role of DPRD members in absorbing public aspirations. Paendong Joan Lolowang (2017), in her study on DPRD members from the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP) faction in Minahasa Regency, found that DPRD members play a crucial role as political communicators in conveying and advocating public aspirations. Her research highlighted the use of personal, group, and mass communication in the absorption process, while also identifying obstacles such as limited recess time, conflicting schedules, low community participation, and budget constraints. Similarly, Nurfadillah Hamidin et al. (2020) analysed the role of DPRD recess activities in

channeling community aspirations in Lakudo District, Central Buton Regency. Their findings indicate that recess activities are relatively effective as a medium for absorbing public aspirations and formulating policy inputs. Nevertheless, the study also identified persistent challenges, including limited time and resources, as well as uneven participation among community groups, which constrain the scope of aspiration absorption.

Meanwhile, Hendro Susanto et al. (2019) examined the absorption of public aspirations by members of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) in West Sumatra Province through working visits. Their study revealed that aspiration absorption strategies involve direct, face-to-face dialogue with diverse community groups, enabling legislators to capture local concerns more comprehensively. These strategies were found to enhance responsiveness, particularly when addressing sector-specific issues. This study contributes a new perspective by focusing on the role of PKB faction members of the Lamongan Regency DPRD. Unlike previous studies that predominantly emphasised a single mechanism such as recesses or working visits this research demonstrates that PKB faction DPRD members employ a combination of formal mechanisms (recesses and working visits) and informal mechanisms (community meetings, organisational forums, and religious dialogues). This multifaceted approach reflects an adaptive strategy aimed at capturing broader and more diverse community aspirations. Moreover, while prior studies primarily highlighted constraints and obstacles, this study also identifies supporting factors that facilitate effective aspiration absorption, such as member commitment and community participation.

Based on the literature review and the identified research gap, this study addresses the following questions: What role do PKB faction members of the Lamongan Regency DPRD play in absorbing public aspirations, and through what mechanisms is this role performed? What factors support and hinder the absorption of public aspirations? This study aims to examine how the PKB faction's majority position in the Lamongan Regency DPRD provides significant potential to influence regional development in line with public aspirations. Accordingly, this research evaluates whether this potential has been optimally utilised, assesses the effectiveness of the representative functions performed by PKB faction DPRD members, and analyses the mechanisms used to absorb community aspirations. Identifying the supporting and inhibiting factors is essential for understanding the dynamics of representative performance and for strengthening democratic governance at the local level.

## **Method**

This research uses a qualitative descriptive research method. Qualitative descriptive research aims to interpret a situation, event, object or anything that can be explained in words. It produces a more in-depth explanation of information, individuals, organisations or groups that can be analysed to elaborate on the research concept. There are two sources of research data, namely primary and secondary. The researcher collected primary data directly in

the PKB faction room of the Lamongan Regency DPRD through interviews, documentation, and observation. Secondary data is collected from several rule books, research journals, and several sources from the internet or websites that are relevant to the research concept. The subjects in this study include the faction chairperson, faction secretary, and members of the Lamongan Regency DPRD PKB Faction.

## **Result and Discussion**

Lamongan Regency is one of the administrative regions in East Java Province, with its governmental center located in Lamongan Subdistrict. As a regency consisting of 27 sub-districts and divided into five electoral districts, Lamongan represents a complex socio-political space in which the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) plays a strategic role in mediating between the local government and the community. In the context of local governance, representative institutions function as key intermediaries between citizens and executive authorities (Pitkin, 1967; Mansbridge, 2003). The Lamongan Regency DPRD is composed of 50 members distributed across several political factions, among which the National Awakening Party (PKB) faction holds a significant position with 12 seats for the 2024–2029 period. This positioning provides the PKB faction with considerable influence in articulating and channeling public aspirations into local governance processes.

In accordance with Law No. 17 of 2014, the DPRD carries out three principal functions: legislation, supervision, and budgeting (Republic of Indonesia, 2014). These functions are inseparable from the representative role of DPRD members, which requires them not only to formulate regulations and oversee government performance, but also to actively absorb, process, and advocate for the aspirations of the people within their respective electoral districts. In democratic systems, the effective absorption of public aspirations is a crucial element of responsive and accountable governance (Dahl, 1989; Fung, 2006). The findings of this study indicate that members of the PKB faction in the Lamongan Regency DPRD have implemented this representative role through a combination of formal and informal mechanisms, reflecting an adaptive approach to the diverse needs and dynamics of the community.

The absorption of public aspirations is primarily conducted through formal mechanisms such as recess activities and working visits or inspections. Recess constitutes a constitutionally mandated forum in which DPRD members temporarily step outside formal legislative sessions to directly engage with their constituents (Republic of Indonesia, 2014). In the case of the PKB faction in Lamongan Regency, recess activities are held three times a year and function as a structured space for the community to voice concerns, submit proposals, and report local problems. This finding supports previous studies which argue that recess serves as an essential institutional channel for legislative responsiveness at the local level (Hamidin et al., 2020). The results of this study show that recess activities are not merely

ceremonial, but are actively used by DPRD members to collect concrete data on community needs, which are later categorized based on urgency and feasibility before being proposed as DPRD Key Issues (Pokir) through the Regional Development Information System (SIPD). This process illustrates how public aspirations are translated from grassroots demands into formal planning instruments within local governance, consistent with participatory governance frameworks (Fung, 2006).

In addition to recess, working visits and surprise inspections serve as another important formal mechanism for absorbing aspirations, particularly in response to urgent or sector-specific problems. Unlike recess activities, working visits are not limited to the electoral district of individual DPRD members, but are instead organized based on the relevance of the issue to specific commissions within the DPRD. This practice reflects a functional division of labor within legislative institutions aimed at increasing effectiveness and policy focus (Susanto et al., 2021). The findings demonstrate that this mechanism allows DPRD members to obtain firsthand information about pressing community issues, such as environmental pollution or public service deficiencies. By directly observing conditions in the field and engaging with affected residents, DPRD members are able to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the problems at hand, thereby strengthening the quality of their oversight and policy recommendations.

Beyond these formal channels, the study reveals that informal mechanisms play a crucial role in the continuous absorption of community aspirations. Informal interactions occur outside scheduled legislative activities and include direct engagement with farmers, fish farmers, religious communities, and local leaders. Scholars of political representation have emphasized that informal and non-institutionalized interactions often enhance trust and improve substantive representation, particularly in culturally embedded societies (Mansbridge, 2003). For members of the PKB faction, whose political base is closely linked to Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), religious and community-based activities provide an important social space for building trust and maintaining close relationships with constituents. Through participation in religious gatherings, organizational inaugurations, and everyday social interactions, DPRD members are able to capture community aspirations in a more relaxed and open atmosphere, where residents may feel more comfortable expressing their concerns without the constraints of formal forums.

These informal mechanisms also enable DPRD members to identify sectoral issues that may not surface during formal meetings, such as difficulties in accessing subsidized fertilizer for farmers or declining fish prices affecting fish farmers. By engaging directly with affected groups, DPRD members can better contextualize these problems and seek appropriate solutions, either through coordination with relevant government agencies or through follow-up discussions such as focus group discussions (FGDs). This practice reinforces the role of DPRD members as intermediaries who not only listen to public demands but also actively facilitate problem-solving processes, a function central to representative democracy (Pitkin, 1967).

The implementation of these various mechanisms reflects the role theory proposed by Soerjono Soekanto, which conceptualizes a role as the dynamic aspect of a social position (Soekanto, 2012). In this context, the PKB faction members of the Lamongan Regency DPRD have demonstrated their ability to enact their representative role in a manner consistent with their institutional status and public mandate. Their engagement through both formal and informal channels highlights a flexible and responsive model of representation that is sensitive to local socio-cultural conditions. However, the effectiveness of aspiration absorption is influenced by several supporting and inhibiting factors. The study identifies the commitment of DPRD members and high levels of community participation as key supporting factors. Strong commitment among PKB faction members is rooted in their sense of responsibility to maintain public trust and to honor the mandate given by their constituents. This finding aligns with studies emphasizing political commitment as a determinant of legislative performance (Paendong & Lolowang, 2019). High levels of community participation, observed during recess activities and informal engagements, further strengthen the aspiration absorption process by providing DPRD members with diverse and substantive input, consistent with participatory democracy theory (Dahl, 1989).

At the same time, budget limitations and time constraints constitute significant inhibiting factors. The realization of community aspirations often requires substantial financial resources, and not all proposals can be accommodated within the available budget. Similar constraints have been identified in previous studies on local legislative institutions (Hamidin et al., 2020; Susanto et al., 2021). Additionally, the demanding schedules of DPRD members, which include meetings, working visits, and comparative studies outside the region, restrict the amount of time they can allocate to direct community engagement. These constraints underscore the structural challenges inherent in representative institutions and highlight the need for more efficient mechanisms to balance legislative duties with constituent representation. Overall, the findings of this study demonstrate that the role of PKB faction members in the Lamongan Regency DPRD in absorbing community aspirations is carried out through a multifaceted and context-sensitive approach. While formal mechanisms ensure procedural accountability and integration into policy planning, informal interactions provide depth, continuity, and social legitimacy to the representative process. The effectiveness of this role, however, remains contingent upon institutional capacity, resource availability, and sustained public participation, all of which are crucial for strengthening democratic governance at the local level (Fung, 2006; Mansbridge, 2003).

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results of this study, it appears that PKB faction DPRD members in Lamongan Regency have been actively absorbing community aspirations. They have done so through various mechanisms, which have been facilitated by the Lamongan government, namely through formal activities such as recesses and working visits or surprise inspections. These formal activities are carried out to increase the closeness between DPRD members and the community, and of course, the

community tends to be more open in expressing their aspirations without formal restrictions. In the process of this research, it was also found that there are two supporting factors in carrying out their roles. The first is the commitment of council members, which allows the Lamongan community to maintain their trust in DPRD members who represent the people in their respective electoral districts. This commitment demonstrates the second supporting factor, namely community participation. Facts on the ground show that during recess activities organised by PKB faction DPRD members, the participation of the Lamongan community was quite high, both in terms of attendance and the presentation of ideas or suggestions. This study also shows the inhibiting factors, namely budget constraints and limited time. To realise the aspirations of the community, the budget is limited and there is a lack of free time given by the government to directly engage with or coordinate with local residents. Given these obstacles, the researcher recommends that members of the PKB faction of the Lamongan DPRD utilise social media and official websites to broaden the reach of public aspirations. In this way, DPRD members can facilitate interaction with the community and then take concrete steps to find solutions that suit their needs. Thus, it will strengthen the relationship between DPRD members and the community, as well as increase public trust in the legislative body.

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