



The Dynamics of Political Elite Regeneration Among Young DPRD Chairs in South Sulawesi

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 2026-04-12

Revised: 2026-05-21

Accepted: 2026-07-29

Keywords:

Local Politics; DPRD

Chairperson Youth; Capital;

Elite Reproduction

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.38043/jids.v10i2.7859>

ABSTRACT

The emergence of young DPRD chairpersons in South Sulawesi reflects a new dynamic in the regeneration of local political elites, yet their rise does not necessarily indicate meritocratic political recruitment. This study aims to analyze how economic, social, and political capital influence the election of young DPRD chairpersons in Gowa, Maros, Soppeng, Bulukumba, Enrekang, and Bone Regencies. Using a qualitative approach with a library research design, the study examines political actors under the age of 35 who attained the position of DPRD chairperson at the regency level. Data were collected from academic literature, online media, party documents, and official government publications and analyzed descriptively and interpretively using Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital. The findings show that the emergence of young DPRD chairpersons is shaped by the accumulation and conversion of economic, social, and political capital. Economic capital provides resources that support political activities and electability, while social capital operates through family networks, organizational affiliations, and patronage relations. Political capital is strengthened by party support, strategic organizational positions, and institutional experience. The interaction and conversion of these forms of capital facilitate access to political positions and reinforce political legitimacy. The study concludes that the regeneration of young local political elites does not necessarily represent meritocratic democratization, but may simultaneously reproduce existing patterns of elite domination through unequal access to and conversion of capital.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The growing involvement of young people in local politics in Indonesia has become one of the key phenomena in the development of democracy in the post-Reformation era. The younger generation no longer plays merely the role of voters but is also active in political parties and youth organizations, and holds strategic positions in government and legislative bodies (Castanho Silva, 2025; McClean & Ono, 2024; Stockemer & Sundström, 2025). This phenomenon is driven by the younger generation's growing political awareness, advancements in digital technology, and the increasing openness of political participation within Indonesia's democratic system (Ida et al., 2025; Wahyuningroem et al., 2023). Social media also plays a role as a means of building political popularity, expanding networks, and mobilizing support more effectively (Hafel, 2023).

In local democracy, the involvement of the younger generation is viewed as part of the regeneration of the political elite as well as a means of strengthening representation in public policy-making. The younger generation has the potential to foster a more inclusive democracy through new ideas, political innovation, and a focus on social change (Checkoway & Aldana, 2013). However, such participation still faces various challenges, such as the dominance of senior elites, a lack of political experience, and limited access to political and economic resources (Best & Cotta, 2000), meaning that opportunities to enter the political arena have not yet been fully realized on an equal footing. This phenomenon is reflected in South Sulawesi, where several regencies are led by Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) chairs under the age of 35, namely Fahmi Adam (Gowa), Muhammad Gemilang Pagessa (Maros), Andi Muhammad Farid (Soppeng), Umy Asyiatun Khadijah (Bulukumba), Ikrar Eran Batu (Enrekang), and Andi Tenri Walinonong (Bone). Their presence indicates that space is increasingly opening up for the younger generation within the structure of local political power.

The emergence of a young Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) chairperson in South Sulawesi reflects a shift in the recruitment patterns of the political elite at the local level. Political parties are beginning to make room for young figures who possess strong electability, social networks, and political communication skills. Young figures are also viewed as more adaptable, communicative, and close to the public particularly young voters, who are becoming increasingly dominant in local political contests (Norris, 2004).

Furthermore, the development of digital media provides opportunities for the younger generation to build a political image, expand their networks, and increase political participation through digital public spaces (Loader et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the election of a young DPRD chairperson in South Sulawesi cannot be separated from the influence of the social, economic, and political capital they possess. Most of these young figures come from political elite families, possess extensive organizational networks, or are backed by specific economic powers. These conditions indicate that local political renewal continues to unfold within a power structure shaped by elite relationships and the distribution of capital in the political arena (Bourdieu, 1986).

From Pierre Bourdieu's perspective, the political arena is a space of competition where various actors with differing forms of capital come together. An individual's success in securing a strategic position is determined not only by personal capacity but also by the ability to accumulate and convert economic capital, social capital, and political capital into power (Bourdieu, 1986). Economic capital enables actors to finance political activities and build influence; social capital provides access to networks, legitimacy, and public trust; while political capital relates to party support, positions within political organizational structures, and access to decision-making processes. Thus, Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital provides a relevant analytical framework for explaining why some young people are more successful in entering the political arena than others.

The shift in legislative leadership from senior politicians to the younger generation has become one of the key phenomena in Indonesia's local political dynamics. However, this change does not always reflect the emergence of a fully open and meritocratic political system. In many cases, the younger generation that succeeds in securing strategic positions still comes from political elite groups, influential families, or has access to economic capital and strong social networks. Thus, the political regeneration that occurs is often a form of elite reproduction in the guise of a new generation (Mosca et al., 1939); (Higley & Burton, 2006). This phenomenon indicates that a change in the age of leadership is not necessarily accompanied by a change in the structure of power distribution in local politics.

Given this situation, questions arise regarding the factors influencing the election of young DPRD chairs in South Sulawesi. On the one hand, the success of the younger generation in securing strategic legislative positions reflects the growing political capacity and participation of young people in local democracy. Young figures are considered more adaptable, closer to the community, and capable of utilizing digital media to build popularity and expand political communication with voters (Loader et al., 2014). However, this success is determined not only by personal capacity but also by the possession of certain forms of capital. This issue represents a research gap, as previous studies have primarily focused on the political participation of the younger generation or oligarchy in general, while research examining the relationship between economic capital, social capital, and political capital in the election of young DPRD chairs at the local level remains limited.

Based on these issues, this study employs Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital to analyze how economic capital, social capital, and political capital interact in shaping the election of young DPRD chairpersons in South Sulawesi. This approach explains the process of conversion between forms of capital as well as the reproduction of the political elite in the local political arena, thereby framing this phenomenon as a dynamic of the distribution of capital and power, rather than merely a matter of leadership renewal (Aspinall & Berenschot, 2019).

This study aims to analyze the influence of economic capital, social capital, and political capital on the election of young DPRD chairpersons in South Sulawesi and to explain the relationships among these forms of capital in the process of local political elite reproduction based on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of local political studies, particularly regarding elite regeneration, the distribution of capital in the political arena, and the dynamics of regional legislative leadership in Indonesia.

2. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a literature review design. The unit of analysis in this study is the configuration of capital possessed by young DPRD chairs in South Sulawesi, specifically those under the age of 35 who have successfully assumed the position of DPRD chair at the regency or city level. This study focuses on how social capital, economic capital, cultural capital, and political capital shape the election process of these young political actors in the local political arena of South Sulawesi. This focus is important to examine because the phenomenon of the emergence of young legislative leaders cannot be understood solely as the result of electoral competition but also as a consequence of the distribution of resources and power relations at work within the local political structure. This study explicitly uses only secondary data and does not involve the collection of primary data through interviews or field observations. A literature review approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to explore various information, documents, and social representations related to the dynamics of the election of young DPRD chairs in South Sulawesi. Thus, this study aims to produce a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between capital and the reproduction of power in local politics.

Research data were obtained from several primary secondary sources. First, official documents, including publications by the General Election Commission (KPU), local government reports, political party documents, and the Asset Disclosure Reports of Public Officials (LHKPN). Second, academic literature in the form of books, journal articles, research findings, and scholarly works discussing local politics, political elites, leadership regeneration, and Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital. Third, supporting data were obtained from online news reports, profiles of key figures, and various publications containing information on the social, economic, educational, and political career backgrounds of young DPRD chairpersons in South Sulawesi.

Data collection was conducted through a documentary study involving several stages. The first stage involved identifying sources relevant to the research focus. The second stage involved classifying the data based on Pierre Bourdieu's categories of capital: economic capital, social capital, cultural capital, and political capital. The third stage involved cataloging and organizing the data to map the relationship between the resources possessed by political actors and their success in securing the position of DPRD chairperson.

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative-descriptive and interpretive approach based on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital. The analysis stages followed the model proposed by (Miles et al., 2013), which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The analysis process began with data reduction through the selection and simplification of information relevant to the research focus. Next, the data were presented in narrative form and through the mapping of inter-capital relationships to identify patterns in the election of young DPRD chairs in South Sulawesi. The final stage involved interpreting the data to explain how the combination of various forms of capital contributes to the formation of political power at the local level.

To ensure the validity and credibility of the findings, this study employed source triangulation. Validation was conducted by comparing information obtained from scientific journals, official documents, government reports, political party publications, LHKPN (Asset and Liability Disclosure Reports), and mass media. Source triangulation was used to ensure data consistency, minimize information bias, and strengthen the interpretation of the phenomenon of the election of young DPRD chairpersons in South Sulawesi.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Trend of Young Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) Chairs in South Sulawesi

The phenomenon of young Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) chairs emerging in South Sulawesi indicates a shift in the pattern of legislative leadership at the local level. Whereas previously leadership positions in the DPRD were generally dominated by senior politicians with extensive experience in political parties, a number of regions are now being led by a younger generation under the age of 35. The presence of young figures in these strategic legislative positions serves as an indicator of the regeneration of the local political elite while also demonstrating the increasing openness of political space for the younger generation within regional power structures (Norris, 2004). This situation also indicates that political parties are beginning to provide opportunities for young cadres to emerge as representatives of a new leadership at the local level (Scarrow et al., 2017)

This phenomenon can be observed in several regencies in South Sulawesi, such as Gowa, Maros, Soppeng, Bulukumba, Enrekang, and Bone. These young DPRD chairpersons come from diverse backgrounds, including entrepreneurs, families from the political elite, and party members who have been active in youth and political organizations. Nevertheless, most of them share a common trait: access to strong social, economic, and political capital within the local political arena (Bourdieu, 1986).

Table 1. List of the Youngest Chairpersons of Regional People's Representative Councils in South Sulawesi

Region	Name	Age	Party
Gowa	Fahmi Adam	25	PPP
Maros	Muhammad Gemilang Pagessa	28	PAN
Soppeng	Andi Muhammad Farid	27	Golkar
Bulukumba	Umy Asyiatun Khadijah	33	PKS
Enrekang	Ikrar Eran Batu	32	NasDem
Bone	Andi Tenri Walinonong	32	Gerindra

Source: Compiled by the Author

Table 1 shows that the phenomenon of young legislative leadership in South Sulawesi demonstrates that the success of young DPRD chairpersons is inextricably linked to the specific forms of capital possessed by each actor. Although they come from different backgrounds, these cases demonstrate how economic capital, social capital, and political capital shape opportunities to secure strategic positions at the local level. However, winning

a legislative seat does not automatically translate into access to the position of DPRD chairperson. The appointment is determined through the internal hierarchy of political parties, in which the Central Executive Board (DPP) makes the final decision based on recommendations from the Provincial Executive Board (DPW) and Regional Executive Board (DPD). Political experience and electoral performance, particularly the number of votes obtained, constitute important considerations in determining the candidate for the chairperson position.

In Gowa Regency, Fahmi Adam became one of the youngest DPRD chairpersons at the age of 25. Although he had only begun his political career in the 2024 general election, he secured 8,108 votes and subsequently assumed the position of DPRD Chairperson through the interim replacement mechanism (PAW). His family background as real estate entrepreneurs in Gowa demonstrates strong economic capital, which was converted into political capital through the support of the United Development Party (PPP) and his electability (Cantika, 2026). In contrast, Muhammad Gemilang Pagessa in Maros Regency benefited primarily from social capital. As the son of the former Regent of Maros and Chair of the Maros Regional Chapter of the Indonesian Youth Council (KNPI), he possessed family and organizational networks that strengthened his social legitimacy and supported his election as DPRD Chairperson through the National Mandate Party (PAN) (Hafidz, 2010).

A similar pattern appears in the case of Andi Muhammad Farid in Soppeng Regency. As the son of a former two-term Regent of Soppeng, he possesses substantial social capital, further strengthened through his involvement in the Golkar Party, AMPI, and HIPMI. The combination of family, organizational, and party networks strengthened his position within the local political structure (Winters, 2011). Meanwhile, Umy Asyiatun Khadijah in Bulukumba Regency represents a different pathway. Without a political-elite family background, she developed her political base through economic capital derived from her professional experience and her role as founder of a private company. This capital was subsequently converted into social and political capital through organizational activities and support from the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), illustrating Bourdieu's concept of capital conversion (Bourdieu, 1986).

In Enrekang Regency, Ikrar Eran Batu demonstrates the stronger role of political capital. His political career began as the youngest DPRD member in the 2019 elections, followed by his service as Deputy Chair before becoming DPRD Chairperson. His institutional experience and position as a NasDem Party cadre strengthened his political legitimacy, expanded his access to political networks, and increased his opportunities to secure strategic positions (Ansar, 2025); (Bourdieu, 1986). Meanwhile, Andi Tenri Walinonong in Bone Regency gained support primarily through social capital derived from family influence and her parents' status as community leaders. In South Sulawesi's local political context, which remains shaped by patronage and social elitism, kinship ties and family reputation function as sources of political legitimacy that strengthen her prospects of securing the DPRD chairperson position (Hafidz, 2010).

These six cases demonstrate that the appointment of young DPRD chairpersons cannot be explained solely by age, electoral performance, or individual capacity. Rather, their political trajectories reflect different configurations and conversions of economic, social, and political capital. While economic capital is particularly evident in the cases of Fahmi and Umy, social capital is more prominent among Gemilang, Farid, and Tenri, whereas Ikrar's trajectory is more strongly associated with political capital. These forms of capital interact with party structures and local political networks to create pathways for young politicians to access strategic legislative leadership positions. The phenomenon of young DPRD chairpersons in South Sulawesi indicates that local political renewal is becoming increasingly dynamic, with growing opportunities for the younger generation to hold strategic positions in legislative bodies. However, their election does not fully reflect open and meritocratic competition, as most are supported by strong social, economic, and political capital (Bourdieu, 1986). From Pierre Bourdieu's perspective, the political arena is a space of competition determined by the distribution and conversion of various forms of capital. Economic capital provides financial resources; social capital builds legitimacy through family and organizational networks; while political capital provides access to party structures and legislative bodies (Shin, 2021; Wei et al., 2023). Thus, the emergence of a young DPRD chairperson in South Sulawesi not only reflects a generational renewal of leadership but also demonstrates the ongoing reproduction of the elite through the control and conversion of capital in local politics.

Economic Capital as the Foundation of Power

In local political contests, economic capital is a key factor influencing access to political power (Jones et al., 2024). Indonesian local politics remains strongly shaped by financial capacity to build networks, mobilize support, and fund electoral activities, giving economically stronger candidates greater access to the political arena (Damanik et al., 2025); (Sari, 2024). From Bourdieu's perspective, economic capital can be converted into social and political capital by building relationships, gaining legitimacy, and strengthening bargaining positions (Bourdieu, 1986). High political costs further make economic resources crucial for financing campaigns, networks, and support. Thus, unequal economic resources continue to influence local power distribution (Winters, 2011).

This phenomenon is evident in the cases of Fahmi Adam in Gowa Regency and Umy Asyiatun Khadijah in Bulukumba Regency. Both demonstrate that economic capital can serve as a foundation for building political influence, which is then converted into social and political capital, as explained in Bourdieu's theory of capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Fahmi Adam comes from a family of real estate entrepreneurs in Gowa Regency, with reported assets of Rp5.93 billion in his LHKPN (Indraswari, 2026). This economic background granted him access to broader social networks and political activities. Although he was a first-time candidate in the 2024 Legislative Election, Fahmi received 8,108 votes and subsequently served as Chair of the Gowa Regency Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) through the interim replacement mechanism (PAW) (Cantika, 2026). This case demonstrates that a family's economic power serves as initial capital that strengthens electability and access to political support.

Economic capital also contributes to political legitimacy. Candidates with substantial economic resources may be perceived as figures possessing leadership capacity, facilitating public trust and political support (Aspinall & Sukmajati, 2018). From Bourdieu's perspective, however, the effectiveness of economic capital depends not only on resources but also on the habitus through which actors navigate and utilize the political field (Bourdieu, 1986). Fahmi Adam's family background in real estate entrepreneurship provided material resources and exposure to economic and social networks that may have shaped dispositions toward networking and influence. These dispositions enabled economic resources to be converted into social recognition and political support. Thus, economic capital functioned not only as campaign financing but also as symbolic capital enhancing competitiveness (Damanik et al., 2025); (Jones et al., 2024). This interaction between capital and habitus helps explain how Fahmi converted economic resources into social and political advantages, demonstrating that young elite success reflects the interaction of resources, dispositions, and capital conversion (Bourdieu, 1986).

A similar phenomenon can be seen in the case of Umy Asyiatun Khadijah in Bulukumba Regency. Umy emerged as a young woman who successfully secured the position of Chair of the Bulukumba Regency Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) at the age of 33 through the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). Unlike some other young figures who gained influence through political family networks, Umy is better known for her economic capital and professional experience at various companies. Before entering politics, Umy worked at several private companies and later founded her own company, PT. Nabilindo Graha Nusantara. This professional experience demonstrates that Umy possessed a relatively independent economic foundation before entering the political arena (Samal, 2024).

In addition to her business experience, Umy was active in various youth and social organizations in Makassar and previously involved with PSI. These experiences may have shaped dispositions toward networking, political engagement, and organizational relationships. From Bourdieu's perspective, such habitus enabled her to recognize and utilize economic resources within the political field, facilitating their conversion into social and political capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

The success of Fahmi Adam and Umy Asyiatun demonstrates that economic capital remains one of the dominant instruments in South Sulawesi's local politics. Local politics is not only an arena for the contest of ideas and personal capabilities but also a arena for competition over economic resources. Young candidates with a strong financial base tend to find it easier to build popularity, secure party support, and access broader political networks. This indicates that the renewal of local politics remains heavily influenced by the distribution of economic capital within society.

Table 2. Characteristics of Economic Capital as the Basis for the Election of Young Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) Chairs

Category	Fahmi Adam (Gowa)	Umy Asyiatun Khadijah (Bulukumba)
Economic foundation	A family of real estate entrepreneurs	Entrepreneur/Company Founder
Wealth	± Rp5,93 billion (LHKPN)	Not published
Business experience	Family business	Professional Experience & Founder of PT Nabilindo Graha Nusantara
Conversion into social capital	Family networks, community leaders	Social and youth organizations
Conversion into political capital	PPP, Chairman of the Gowa Regional House of Representatives	PKS, Chairman of the Bulukumba Regional House of Representatives
Dominant form of capital	Family economic capital	Self-reliant economic capital

Source: Compiled by the author (2026).

Based on the table above, Fahmi Adam and Umy Asyiatun Khadijah both became DPRD chairs at a young age but accumulated political power through different forms of economic capital. Fahmi's economic capital originated from his family's real estate wealth, whereas Umy built hers through professional experience and

entrepreneurship. These differences show that economic capital can originate from different sources while serving similar functions: building networks, increasing political visibility, and strengthening positions within the political arena. In local Indonesian politics, economic capital is converted into social capital through networks and public trust, and subsequently into political capital through party support and access to office. This process is also shaped by habitus, as actors' social and professional experiences may form dispositions that enable them to recognize and utilize available resources within the political field. These findings align with (Berenschot, 2018), who highlights the role of economic resources and social networks in Indonesian political patronage, and (Mietzner, 2013), who emphasizes resource management, power networks, and organizational support. Thus, economic capital remains a crucial foundation for political legitimacy and power among young local elites (Bourdieu, 1986).

Social Capital and the Influence of Elite Networks

In the dynamics of local politics, social capital is one of the key factors influencing an individual's success in gaining political power. Social capital is not only related to interpersonal relationships but also encompasses social networks, proximity to the political elite, kinship ties, organizational membership, and the social legitimacy an individual holds within the community. From Pierre Bourdieu's perspective, social capital is the accumulation of resources acquired through a continuous network of relationships (Bourdieu, 1986). Through these networks, a political actor can gain support, trust, and access to the resources of power that increase the chances of victory in the political arena.

In the context of local politics in Indonesia, social capital is largely shaped through elite family ties, organizational networks, and patronage relationships that develop within society. Local politics remains influenced by clientelism, making proximity to influential figures and social networks critical factors in securing legitimacy, political support, and access to resources (Aspinall & Berenschot, 2019). This situation is evident in the cases of Muhammad Gemilang Pagessa in Maros Regency, Andi Muhammad Farid in Soppeng Regency, and Andi Tenri Walinonong in Bone Regency, who successfully secured the position of Chair of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) at a young age with the support of strong social capital.

Muhammad Gemilang Pagessa became Chair of the Maros Regency Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) at the age of 28 through the National Mandate Party (PAN). His election was bolstered by his status as the son of a former Maros Regent, which afforded him social legitimacy, public recognition, and access to the region's political elite networks. In local politics, elite families serve as a source of social capital that facilitates candidates' ability to gain public trust (Winters, 2011). In addition, Gemilang was also active as Chair of the Maros Regional Chapter of the Indonesian National Youth Council (KNPI), which expanded his social network and strengthened his political legitimacy among young people. Youth organizations serve as arenas for building social-political networks that can be converted into electoral support (Putnam, 2000). These findings indicate that social capital derived from family, organizations, and patronage is a key factor in strengthening the position of the younger generation in the local political arena.

A similar phenomenon is evident in the case of Andi Muhammad Farid in Soppeng Regency. At the age of 27, Andi Farid succeeded in becoming Chair of the Soppeng Regency Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) through the Golkar Party. He is the son of the former two-term Regent of Soppeng, H. A. Kaswadi Razak. His father's influence as a local political figure provided social legitimacy while also facilitating access to political and community networks. In the political context of South Sulawesi, kinship ties and a family's social status exert a significant influence on the establishment of political legitimacy. A cultural tradition that still holds elite figures and noble families in high regard means that a family name serves as a crucial instrument in building public trust (Hafidz, 2010).

In addition to family factors, Andi Muhammad Farid is also active in youth and business organizations such as AMPI and HIPMI. AMPI serves as a platform for political cadre development and the formation of networks among the party's young elite, while HIPMI provides access to networks of young entrepreneurs and the local economic elite. Participation in these organizations strengthens Andi Farid's socio-political capital while expanding his relationships with various strategic groups in the region.

In Bone Regency, Andi Tenri Walinonong followed a similar pattern in building political social capital. At the age of 32, she succeeded in becoming Chair of the Bone Regency Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) through the Gerindra Party. Andi Tenri is the daughter of a community leader who is quite well-known in Bone Regency, namely H. Andi Maddusila Takka. This family status provided strong symbolic capital in building political legitimacy and social support at the local level. In South Sulawesi's local politics, community leaders hold an important position as social patrons capable of influencing the political preferences of the public.

The cases of Gemilang Pagessa, Andi Muhammad Farid, and Andi Tenri Walinonong demonstrate that social capital plays a major role in shaping young legislative leadership in South Sulawesi. Local politics is influenced not only by personal capacity and electoral competition but also by social networks, elite family ties, and political patronage. These networks may contribute to the formation of a habitus oriented toward political networking, trust-

building, and recognition of established power relations. Consequently, young actors from families or organizations with existing political connections may develop dispositions that facilitate access to and navigation of the political field. This indicates that political renewal remains influenced by elite reproduction, as young people securing strategic positions generally come from groups with established access to social networks and political power (Winters, 2011)

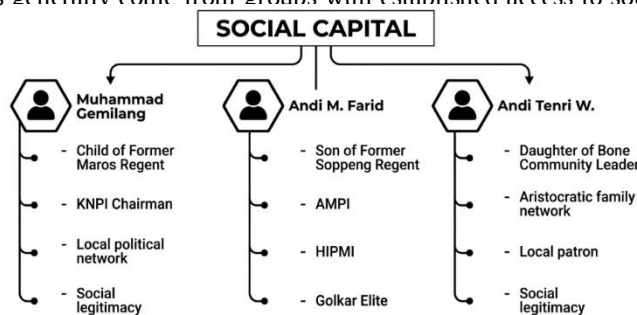


Figure 1. Mapping the Social Capital of Young Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) Chairs in South Sulawesi

Based on the diagram, it is evident that social capital is one of the dominant factors shaping the success of several young DPRD chairpersons in South Sulawesi. Muhammad Gemilang Pagessa, Andi Muhammad Farid, and Andi Tenri Walinonong follow a relatively similar pattern: they gain political advantage through social networks established before entering the political arena. Gemilang derived his social capital from his status as the son of a former Regent of Maros, which expanded his access to the local elite network, while his position as Chair of the Maros KNPI strengthened his ties with youth organizations and the community. Andi Muhammad Farid built his social capital through kinship ties as the son of a former Regent of Soppeng, a foundation further reinforced by his involvement in the AMPI and HIPMI organizations. Meanwhile, Andi Tenri Walinonong derived social legitimacy from her family's status as part of the community leadership and the aristocratic network in Bone Regency.

In the political context of South Sulawesi, which remains influenced by patronage and kinship ties, family and organizational networks serve as crucial resources for gaining public trust and strengthening one's position in political competition (Yakub et al., 2022). Thus, social capital takes the form not only of personal relationships but also of the accumulation of family networks, organizational ties, and patronage that generate political legitimacy. This finding aligns with Herdiyanti (2024), who explains that social networks, trust, and norms of cooperation are the main components of social capital, as well as with Azizah et al., (2021), who asserts that strong social relationships are a vital asset in building political influence. From Bourdieu (1986) perspective, this social capital is also reinforced by a political habitus formed through the family environment and long-term social experiences. Proximity to the exercise of power from an early age enables these actors to better understand local political dynamics, thereby granting them a greater capacity to adapt and maintain their positions within the political arena.

Political Capital and Party Support

In Indonesia's democratic system, political parties play a central role as the primary vehicle for the distribution of political power. Strategic positions such as Chair of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) are determined not only by a candidate's popularity or personal capabilities but are also heavily influenced by party support and the configuration of party power within the regional legislature. From Pierre Bourdieu's perspective, political capital is power acquired through position, relationships, and legitimacy within the arena of power (Bourdieu, 1986). This capital encompasses one's standing within the party structure, proximity to the party elite, experience in political organizations, and the ability to secure institutional support.

In local politics, political parties serve as the primary institutions in the process of recruiting elites and distributing political positions. The position of Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) Chair is generally awarded to the party that wins the most seats or holds a dominant position within the regional parliamentary coalition. Consequently, candidates with strong ties to the party elite and who occupy strategic positions within the party organization have a greater chance of securing a leadership position in the legislature (Hadiz, 2010). This phenomenon is evident in the case of the young Chair of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) in South Sulawesi, who received support from the PPP, Golkar, NasDem, PAN, PKS, and Gerindra. The support from these parties not only provides formal legitimacy but also offers political networks, organizational resources, and access to the ruling elite.

In Gowa Regency, Fahmi Adam succeeded in securing the position of Chair of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) through the United Development Party (PPP). In addition to being known as a

young figure with a strong economic base, Fahmi also serves as Secretary of the Gowa Regency PPP Branch. This strategic position demonstrates that Fahmi's political capital stems not only from his personal electability but also from his close ties to the party elite at the local level. In Indonesia's political system, positions within party leadership are a crucial factor because they determine access to decision-making processes and the distribution of political power (Fionna & Tomsa, 2020).

A similar phenomenon is evident in the case of Andi Muhammad Farid in Soppeng Regency through the Golkar Party. As a major party with a strong political network in South Sulawesi, Golkar wields significant influence in local politics. Andi Farid's involvement in party-affiliated organizations such as AMPI demonstrates how the party's cadre development process serves as a vital instrument in shaping the young political elite. Through such organizations, young cadres gain organizational experience, political networks, and close ties to the party elite, which strengthen their positions in the local political arena.

In Enrekang Regency, Ikrar Eran Batu demonstrates how political capital is built through institutional experience and party support. As a NasDem Party cadre, Ikrar began his political career following the 2019 general election and previously served as Deputy Chair of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD). This experience illustrates that political capital is shaped not only by popularity but also through the accumulation of political experience and strategic positions within legislative bodies.

Meanwhile, Muhammad Gemilang Pagessa in Maros Regency received support from the National Mandate Party (PAN). In addition to coming from the family of a former Maros Regent, Gemilang's involvement in PAN highlights the importance of the relationship between family elites and party elites in the distribution of political power. PAN served as a political vehicle that strengthened Gemilang's legitimacy in the local political arena. A similar phenomenon is evident in the case of Umy Asyiatun Khadijah in Bulukumba Regency through the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). PKS is known for its strong cadre development system and high organizational discipline. PKS's support for Umy demonstrates that political parties play a major role in creating opportunities for young figures-including women-to hold strategic positions within legislative bodies. In Bone Regency, Andi Tenri Walinonong received support from the Gerindra Party. As one of the major national parties, Gerindra wields strong influence in the political configuration of the regional parliament. The party's support provides formal legitimacy while simultaneously strengthening Andi Tenri's position within the regional legislative power structure.

The phenomenon of young DPRD chairs in South Sulawesi demonstrates that local legislative leadership is strongly shaped by party configuration and the distribution of power within the legislature. Young candidates who hold strategic party positions, maintain connections with political elites, and receive organizational support tend to gain easier access to political office. These experiences may also shape habitus by developing dispositions toward political networking, organizational engagement, and navigating party structures. Thus, their success is determined not only by personal capacity and public support but also by political capital derived from party support and elite connections (Hafidz, 2010); (Winters, 2011).

Table 3. Political Capital and the Power of Political Parties Among Young Chairpersons of Regional People's Representative Councils in South Sulawesi

Speaker of the House of Representatives	Political Parties	Key Political Capital	Party Position/Strength	Political Output
Fahmi Adam (Gowa)	PPP	Secretary of the Gowa PPP Branch Committee	Party leadership structure	Chairman of the Gowa Regional House of Representatives
Muhammad Gemilang Pagessa (Maros)	PAN	Support from PAN and the family's elite network	Winning/Influential Party in the Regional People's Representative Council	Chairman of the Maros Regional House of Representatives
Andi Muhammad Farid (Soppeng)	Golkar	Golkar Party Members, AMPI	Golkar as the dominant party	Chairperson of the Soppeng Regional People's Representative Council
Ikrar Eran Batu (Enrekang)	NasDem	Deputy Chair of the Regional People's Representative Council, NasDem Party member	Institutional experience	Chairperson of the Enrekang Regional People's Representative Council
Umy Asyiatun Khadijah (Bulukumba)	PKS	PKS cadre	A robust leadership development system	Chairman of the Bulukumba Regional House of Representatives
Andi Tenri Walinonong (Bone)	Gerindra	Support from Gerindra	A party's strength in parliament	Chairman of the Bone Regional House of Representatives

Source: Compiled by the author based on various sources (2024–2026).

Pierre Bourdieu's perspective, the local political field is a space where various actors compete for positions, legitimacy, and power through the accumulation of political capital (Bourdieu, 1986). The research findings indicate that the position of the young Chair of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) in South Sulawesi was not obtained solely through electoral victory, but also through the actors' ability to leverage the power structures of political parties as the primary arena for the distribution of political offices. Empirically, Fahmi Adam benefited from his position as Secretary of the PPP District Executive Committee (DPC) in Gowa Regency; Muhammad Gemilang Pagessa was supported by his family's political network and the National Mandate Party (PAN); Andi Muhammad Farid strengthened his position through Golkar's cadre development program and the AMPI organization; while Ikrar Eran Batu built his legitimacy through his experience as Deputy Chair of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) and as a cadre of the NasDem Party. Umy Asyiatun Khadijah leveraged the Party of Justice and Prosperity (PKS) cadre development system, while Andi Tenri Walinonong received support from the Gerindra Party's influence in the regional legislature. These varied pathways demonstrate that the local political arena is not neutral but rather a space shaped by power relations and the distribution of capital. Actors who hold strategic positions within their parties, have access to political networks, and enjoy institutional support tend to occupy dominant positions in the political field and have a greater chance of securing the position of Chair of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD). Thus, the success of these young DPRD chairs reflects how the structure of the local political arena operates through mechanisms of capital accumulation and the reproduction of power (Bourdieu, 1986).

These findings confirm that political parties remain the primary actors in the recruitment and distribution of political elites at the local level. Success in securing the position of Chair of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) is determined not only by a candidate's electability but is also influenced by the degree of party institutionalization, cadre development mechanisms, one's position within the organizational structure, and the party's ability to build political support in the legislature. Randall & Svåsand (2002) explain that well-institutionalized parties are capable of producing a more structured elite recruitment process, while Norris (2004) emphasizes that political parties act as gatekeepers who determine candidate selection, the distribution of political resources, and access to public office. Thus, political capital is the result of the interaction between individual capacity and the party's institutional support in shaping political leadership at the local level.

Inter Elite Relations: The Reproduction of the Young Political Elite

The phenomenon of young DPRD chairpersons emerging in South Sulawesi demonstrates that the success of the younger generation in securing strategic positions within legislative bodies is not determined by a single form of capital, but rather by the interplay between economic, social, and political capital. From (Bourdieu, 1986) perspective, the political arena is a space of competition where actors utilize their various resources to gain legitimacy and maintain power. Economic capital can be converted into social capital through the expansion of networks and influence, while social capital can be transformed into political capital through the support of parties, organizations, and access to power structures.

These interrelationships among forms of capital are evident among all the young DPRD chairpersons in South Sulawesi. Fahmi Adam in Gowa Regency built his political power through his family's economic capital in the real estate sector, which was then converted into political support through the United Development Party (PPP). Muhammad Gemilang Pagessa in Maros Regency gained social capital from his status as the son of a former Maros Regent and his network as Chair of the Maros Regional Chapter of the Indonesian Youth Council (KNPI), which was reinforced by support from the National Mandate Party (PAN). Andi Muhammad Farid in Soppeng Regency also gained political legitimacy through family ties as the son of a former Soppeng Regent, coupled with his involvement in the AMPI and HIPMI organizations and support from the Golkar Party. Meanwhile, Umy Asyiatun Khadijah in Bulukumba Regency exhibits a different pattern, as her economic capital was built through professional experience and entrepreneurial activities before being converted into political capital through the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS).

A similar pattern is also evident in the cases of Ikrar Eran Batu in Enrekang Regency and Andi Tenri Walinonong in Bone Regency. Ikrar built his political capital through institutional experience as a member and vice chair of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD), as well as his position as a cadre of the NasDem Party. Conversely, Andi Tenri Walinonong acquired social capital through family influence and her parents' social status as community leaders in Bone, which was subsequently reinforced by support from the Gerindra Party. These variations indicate that each actor follows a distinct path of capital accumulation, yet all leverage the interplay between economic, social, and political capital to secure strategic positions within the local

political arena. This finding reinforces the argument by Aspinall & Berenschot (2019) that local democracy in Indonesia remains shaped by patronage and elite networks linking families, political parties, organizations, and economic resources. Winters (2011) also explains that the reproduction of elites in a democratic system occurs through the control and conversion of various forms of capital into the political arena.

However, this study offers a different perspective from previous research. While most studies have focused solely on dynastic politics or oligarchy in isolation, this study demonstrates that the reproduction of young political elites in South Sulawesi occurs through dynamic inter-capital relationships. The political habitus formed within the family environment, the competitive local political arena, and the actors' ability to convert economic, social, and political capital are the primary factors explaining the younger generation's success in securing the position of Chair of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD). Thus, the emergence of a young elite in South Sulawesi not only represents a regeneration of leadership but also demonstrates the continuity of the power structure through elite reproduction in the form of a new generation.

4. CONCLUSION

This study shows that the election of a young DPRD chairperson in South Sulawesi is not determined solely by individual capacity, but also by the accumulation and conversion of economic capital, social capital, and political capital, as explained by Pierre Bourdieu. Economic capital supports political activity and electability; social capital provides access to family networks, organizations, and social legitimacy; while political capital is manifested through party support, position within the party structure, and institutional experience. These findings indicate that the renewal of legislative leadership in South Sulawesi is still influenced by the distribution of capital and power relations, and thus does not yet fully reflect a meritocratic political system.

The study also found variations in the dominant forms of capital among individual actors. Fahmi Adam and Umy Asyiatun Khadijah rely more on economic capital; Muhammad Gemilang Pagessa, Andi Muhammad Farid, and Andi Tenri Walinonong rely on social capital; while Ikrar Eran Batu is supported more by political capital. Although the paths taken differ, all cases demonstrate that the political success of the younger generation is the result of the interaction of various forms of capital within the local political arena.

This study has several limitations, namely the use of secondary data that cannot fully capture subjective experiences and internal party dynamics; a scope limited to six young DPRD chairpersons in South Sulawesi; and an analytical focus restricted to economic, social, and political capital without an in-depth examination of habitus, cultural capital, and symbolic capital.

Theoretically, this study reinforces Bourdieu's argument regarding the interrelationships among forms of capital in the reproduction of the political elite. Practically, political parties need to strengthen more open and competency-based leadership development programs, while local governments and youth organizations need to expand political education and leadership development for the younger generation. Future research is recommended to use comparative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approaches to examine the influence of various forms of capital on the regeneration of the political elite in Indonesia.

5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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