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Modernization and Cultural Shift in Indigenous Communities: Evidence from the Pado'e under Mining Expansion

Lebba

Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnia, Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta,
Jakarta, Indonesia

email: lebba@uinjkt.ac.id

Muhammad Ali

Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sorong,
Sorong, Indonesia

email: mulisidiq@gmail.com

Abbas Langaji

Fakultas Ushuluddin, Adab dan Dakwah, Universitas Islam Negeri Palopo,
Palopo, Indonesia

email: abbaslangaji@uinpalopo.ac.id

Munir Yusuf

Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan, Universitas Islam Negeri Palopo,
Palopo, Indonesia

email: munir_yusuf@uinpalopo.ac.id

M. Syafril Marib Setiawan Lebba

Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Politik, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran
Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia

email: 2410421013@mahasiswa.upnvj.ac.id

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Abstract

This study examines how mining-led modernization has reconfigured the cultural and socio-economic life of the Pado'e indigenous community in East Luwu and evaluates the extent to which PT Vale's corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs respond to the resulting problems. The study uses a qualitative case-study design with an ethnographic orientation, drawing on fieldwork conducted from June 2021 to January 2022 through semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and documentary analysis. The analysis identifies four interrelated shifts: livelihoods have moved from predominantly subsistence activities toward commercial agriculture, wage labor, entrepreneurship, and greater market dependence; formal education has become a central household aspiration; family authority, gendered mobility, domestic roles, and spouse selection have become more negotiable; and mutual cooperation remains morally important but is less dominant in organizing everyday life. PT Vale's education, health, agriculture, enterprise, socio-cultural, sports, and infrastructure programs have expanded access to services. However, corporate aggregate data do not show how benefits are distributed among Pado'e households or whether supported livelihoods remain viable without company assistance. The findings, therefore, interpret modernization as a selective reconfiguration of cultural institutions rather than a complete disappearance of tradition, while treating CSR as a partial response that has not resolved historical land grievances, unequal participation, or dependence on the mining economy.

[Studi ini mengkaji bagaimana modernisasi yang dipicu oleh pertambangan telah mengubah kehidupan budaya, sosial, dan ekonomi masyarakat adat Pado'e di Luwu Timur, serta mengevaluasi sejauh mana program tanggung jawab sosial perusahaan (CSR) PT Vale telah menanggapi masalah yang timbul. Studi ini menggunakan desain dengan studi kasus kualitatif melalui orientasi etnografi berdasarkan kerja lapangan yang dilakukan dari Juni 2021 hingga Januari 2022 melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi langsung, dan analisis dokumen. Analisis tersebut mengidentifikasi empat pergeseran yang saling terkait yakni mata pencaharian telah bergeser dari kegiatan subsisten yang dominan menuju pertanian komersial, kerja upah, kewirausahaan, dan ketergantungan pada pasar yang lebih besar; pendidikan formal telah menjadi aspirasi rumah tangga yang utama; otoritas keluarga, mobilitas gender, peran domestik, dan pemilihan pasangan telah menjadi lebih dapat dinegosiasikan; dan kerja sama timbal balik tetap penting secara moral, tetapi kurang dominan dalam mengatur kehidupan sehari-hari. Program pendidikan, kesehatan, pertanian, kewirausahaan, sosial-budaya, olahraga, dan infrastruktur PT Vale telah memperluas akses ke layanan. Namun, data agregat perusahaan tidak menunjukkan bagaimana manfaat didistribusikan di antara rumah tangga Pado'e atau apakah mata pencaharian yang

didukung tetap layak tanpa bantuan perusahaan. Oleh karena itu, temuan tersebut menafsirkan modernisasi sebagai konfigurasi ulang selektif lembaga budaya, bukan sebagai hilangnya tradisi sepenuhnya, sementara memperlakukan CSR sebagai respons parsial yang belum menyelesaikan keluhan tanah historis, partisipasi yang tidak setara, atau ketergantungan pada ekonomi pertambangan.]

Keywords: modernization; cultural shift; Pado'e indigenous community; mining expansion; social responsibility

Introduction

Large-scale mining is often presented as a driver of regional development because it creates employment, infrastructure, and connections to wider markets. For indigenous communities, however, mining-led modernization is not merely an economic transition. Land and natural resources are also connected to livelihood, identity, ancestral memory, and social obligation.¹ Studies of mining and indigenous peoples show that extractive expansion can simultaneously create opportunities and unsettle cultural, ecological, and political relationships.² In Indonesia, this tension is intensified when communities affected by mining have limited influence over laws and decisions concerning their customary territories.³

The Indonesian mining sector has historically been shaped by state-centered development policies that prioritized investment and resource extraction. In practice, the distribution of benefits has often been uneven, while local communities have faced land conversion, environmental pressures, and restricted participation. Recent legal research emphasizes that meaningful indigenous participation is necessary because affected communities are not merely recipients of

¹ Nicholas Bainton, "Mining and Indigenous Peoples," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Anthropology* (Oxford University Press New York, NY, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190854584.013.121>.

² Toni Dobinson et al., "Anthropogenic Impacts of Mining on Indigenous Peoples in Western Australia: Divergent Values," *Ethnicities* 24, no. 4 (2024): 635–55, <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687968231219582>.

³ Asrul Ibrahim Nur, Sholahuddin Al Fatih, and Christina Clarissa Intania, "Revitalising Indigenous Rights Participation in Mining Lawmaking Process: Evaluation and Proposal for Indonesia," *Law Reform* 20, no. 1 (August 15, 2024): 188–210, <https://doi.org/10.14710/lr.v20i1.63684>.

development; they also possess institutions and knowledge central to environmental stewardship and cultural continuity.⁴

Corporate social responsibility is commonly used to reduce the social and environmental tensions surrounding mining. However, the existence of CSR programs does not by itself demonstrate community empowerment. CSR may provide education, health services, infrastructure, and livelihood support, but it can also function as a mechanism for managing conflict without resolving structural problems.⁵ The concept of a social license to operate, therefore, stresses trust, procedural fairness, environmental credibility, and sustained community acceptance rather than program expenditure alone.⁶ Critical reviews further show that durable acceptance depends on legitimacy, trust, fairness, and continuing dialogue rather than a one-time claim of community approval.⁷ The social license concept has consequently developed into a broader framework for evaluating the quality of company-community relations over time.⁸

⁴ Nur, Al Fatih, and Intania.

⁵ Ana Lúcia Santiago et al., "Understanding the Fundamentals of the Social Licence to Operate: Its Evolution, Current State of Development and Future Avenues for Research," *Resources Policy* 70 (March 2021): 101941, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2020.101941>; Benjamin C. Collins and Mustafa Kumral, "A Critical Perspective on Social License to Operate Terminology for Canada's Most Vulnerable Mining Communities," *The Extractive Industries and Society* 8, no. 2 (June 2021): 100836, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2020.11.002>; John R. Owen and Deanna Kemp, "Corporate Responses to Community Grievance: Voluntarism and Pathologies of Practice," *Journal of Business Ethics* 189, no. 1 (January 31, 2024): 55–68, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-023-05332-0>.

⁶ Konstantinos Komnitsas, "Social License to Operate in Mining: Present Views and Future Trends," *Resources* 9, no. 6 (2020): 79, <https://doi.org/10.3390/resources9060079>.

⁷ Kieren Moffat et al., "The Social Licence to Operate: A Critical Review," *Forestry* 89, no. 5 (September 2016): 477–88, <https://doi.org/10.1093/forestry/cpv044>.

⁸ Karin Beland Lindahl et al., "To Approve or Not to Approve? A Comparative Analysis of State-Company-Indigenous Community Interactions in Mining in Canada and Sweden," *Environmental Management* 73, no. 5 (May 6, 2024): 946–61, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00267-024-01949-7>; Gregory Poelzer et al., "Community as Governor: Exploring the Role of Community between Industry and Government in SLO," *Environmental Management* 72, no. 1 (July 19, 2023): 70–83, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00267-022-01681-0>; Anthony Kung et al., "Indigenous Co-Ownership of Mining Projects: A Preliminary Framework for the Critical Examination of Equity Participation," *Journal of Energy & Natural Resources Law* 40, no. 4 (October 2, 2022): 413–35, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02646811.2022.2029184>.

Community responses to mining are rarely uniform. Some residents value employment, roads, and public services, while others emphasize the loss of land, unequal compensation, ecological damage, or exclusion from decision-making. Comparative research indicates that resistance or acceptance is shaped by the distribution of costs and benefits, the degree of economic dependence, and the quality of participation.⁹ This complexity is important in analyzing the Pado'e community because the same process of modernization may be experienced as an opportunity by one household and a dispossession by another.

These tensions have long characterized mining development in Sorowako and the surrounding Nuha–Wasuponda highlands. Historical and recent research describes a mining enclave in which industrial infrastructure and employment expanded alongside unequal access to land, compensation, information, and decision-making. Land acquisition, relocation, and access to company employment became persistent sources of dissatisfaction. The history of conflict is therefore not separate from cultural change: it shapes how Pado'e families interpret modernization, corporate assistance, and their relationship with state and company institutions.¹⁰

The transformation of land use also affected the ecological basis of Pado'e's life. Aditjondro documented pressure on local residents to release land during the early development of the Sorowako project.¹¹ Such changes reduced community control over spaces used for gardening, hunting, gathering forest products, and maintaining social

⁹ Marta Conde and Philippe Le Billon, "Why Do Some Communities Resist Mining Projects While Others Do Not?," *The Extractive Industries and Society* 4, no. 3 (2017): 681–97, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2017.04.009>.

¹⁰ Primi Suharmadhi Putri, "Local Communities and Transparency in Indonesian Mining Legislation," *Journal of Energy & Natural Resources Law* 41, no. 4 (October 2, 2023): 431–55, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02646811.2022.2136336>; Kristina Großmann, "Conflicting Notions of Land in Indonesia," *Society & Natural Resources* 37, no. 5 (May 3, 2024): 644–59, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2023.2223540>; Muhammad Aflahal Mukmin, "PT Vale's Security and Social Conflict Management Strategy in the Face of Land Disputes and Natural Resource Security Risks," *Journal of Public Representative and Society Provision* 5, no. 2 (June 10, 2025): 458–69, <https://doi.org/10.55885/jprsp.v5i2.592>.

¹¹ George Y. Aditjondro, "Dapatkah Soroako dan Tembagapura Menjadi Pusat Perkembangan Daerah?," *Prisma*, no. 8 (August 1982): 47–65.

relationships. Mining expansion consequently altered both material livelihoods and the cultural practices embedded in those livelihoods.

Historical reports further describe forest degradation, reduced access to resin and rattan, and the incorporation of foothill gardens into mining concessions.¹² Research specifically concerning the Pado'e identifies a movement away from gardening, buffalo raising, sago processing, forest gathering, and hunting toward wage labor and market-oriented activities.¹³ More recent ethnographic work also records changes in family relations, education, mobility, and economic aspirations.¹⁴ Agricultural change in East Luwu demonstrates that farming itself has not disappeared, but has increasingly been reorganized around commercial crops and market valuation.¹⁵

Recent research on Indonesia's nickel sector confirms that mining can produce mixed social outcomes rather than a uniform development trajectory. Village-level analysis has found substantial forest-cover loss alongside uneven changes in infrastructure, health, education, and social relations. Studies from Sulawesi also document changes in vegetation, livelihoods, coastal and agrarian resources, and local perceptions of economic opportunity. These findings support an analysis that evaluates cultural and material gains together with ecological loss and unequal exposure to risk.¹⁶

¹² Carolyn Marr, *Digging Deep: The Hidden Costs of Mining in Indonesia*, DTE Special Report 2 (Down to Earth and Minewatch, 1993), 25–26, <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/catalog/2929003>.

¹³ Lebba Kadorre Pongsibanne, Hamka Naping, Supriadi Hamdat, and Ansar Arifin, "Social Cultural Transformation in Attitude and Behavior of Pado'e Community," *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology Research* 4, no. 5 (2018): 1–19, <https://ejournals.org/wp-content/uploads/Social-Cultural-Transformation-in-Attitude-and-Behavior-of-Padoe-Community.pdf>.

¹⁴ Lebba, *Komunitas Pado'e di Lingkungan Pertambangan Nikel Kabupaten Luwu Timur*, ed. Sitti Murni Kaddi (Jakarta: Sejahtera Kita and Ushul Press, 2022), <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/bitstream/123456789/61172/1/Komunitas-Pado'e.pdf>.

¹⁵ Slamet Riadi et al., "Studi Valuasi Ekonomi dan Etnografi Perkebunan Merica di Tanamalia, Luwu Timur," *Bulletin of Economic Studies (BEST)* 4, no. 3 (2024): 152–66, <https://doi.org/10.24252/best.v4i3.52782>.

¹⁶ Michaela G.Y. Lo et al., "Nickel Mining Reduced Forest Cover in Indonesia but Had Mixed Outcomes for Well-Being," *One Earth* 7, no. 11 (November 2024): 2019–33, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.oneear.2024.10.010>; Rini Astuti, Sujatha Raman, and Ardhitya Eduard Yeremia, "Putting Community-Centric Justice into Just Transitions from the Global South: The Case of Indonesia's Nickel Sector," *Environmental*

Recent governance scholarship further emphasizes that indigenous participation must involve influence over decisions, not only consultation after key choices have been made. Comparative mining research associates more durable legitimacy with transparent engagement, community authority, accountable state regulation, and long-term agreements that can be monitored. Conversely, consultation may reproduce conflict when companies or governments control the agenda, the information, and the definition of acceptable outcomes.¹⁷

Although the existing literature provides an important account of land conflicts and economic transformation, it does not always explain in sufficient depth how traditional values, everyday behavior, rituals, family authority, and social structures have changed. Moreover, descriptions of CSR commonly list program areas without critically examining whether the programs address land grievances, cultural disruption, and unequal power. This article, therefore, asks two questions: how has mining-led modernization changed livelihoods, education, family and gender relations, mutual cooperation, and cultural practices in the Pado'e community, and to what extent do PT Vale's CSR programs promote community agency rather than dependence?

This study uses a qualitative case-study approach to examine these questions. Qualitative inquiry is appropriate because cultural change is expressed through meanings, experiences, practices, and relationships that cannot be reduced to numerical indicators. The analysis followed an iterative thematic process of familiarization, coding, category development, comparison, and interpretation. Interview narratives, observations, and documentary evidence were

Research Letters 20, no. 5 (May 1, 2025): 054020, <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/adc8b9>; Robyn Boldy et al., "Assessing Impacts of Mining on Provisioning Ecosystem Services in a Culturally Diverse Landscape of Western Cape York, Australia," *Landscape Ecology* 38, no. 12 (December 12, 2023): 4467–81, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10980-023-01745-4>.

¹⁷ Poelzer et al., "Community as Governor: Exploring the Role of Community between Industry and Government in SLO"; Beland Lindahl et al., "To Approve or Not to Approve? A Comparative Analysis of State-Company-Indigenous Community Interactions in Mining in Canada and Sweden"; Janine Ubink and Joanna Pickering, "The Mine, the Community, and the Chief—Mining Governance and Community Representation in Conditions of Legal Pluralism," *Legal Pluralism and Critical Social Analysis* 56, no. 2 (May 3, 2024): 236–64, <https://doi.org/10.1080/27706869.2024.2372898>.

examined together. At the same time, earlier ethnographic documentation provided a historical baseline for interpreting the 2021–2022 field material, including the Pado'e community elder's account of displacement and family separation.¹⁸

Methods

Research Design, Informants, and Data Collection

The research employed a qualitative case-study design with an ethnographic orientation in Pado'e settlements across the Nuha–Wasuponda highlands of East Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi. The study was bounded geographically by Balambano, Tabarano, Wasuponda, Ledu-Ledu, Magani, and Nikel, and analytically by changes in livelihoods, education, family and gender relations, communal cooperation, ritual practice, and experiences with corporate community development programs. Earlier ethnographic studies were used as a historical baseline, while the 2021–2022 field material was used to examine how local actors interpreted contemporary change. The study also engages with previous research that specifically documented changes in Pado'e attitudes and behavior after the expansion of mining.¹⁹

Fieldwork was conducted from June 2021 to January 2022 through semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and document review. Ten informants were selected purposively for their knowledge of Pado'e history, customary practices, livelihoods, family relations, land issues, employment, and community development programs. The sample included community elders, women, young people, farmers, workers, religious or customary figures, program participants, and a company representative. Exact ages and village identifiers are not reported for several participants in order to reduce the possibility of identification within a relatively small community. The two interviews quoted directly in this article are a Pado'e elder interviewed in January

¹⁸ Lebba Lebba, *Kajian Etnografi Terhadap Komunitas Pado'e Di Kecamatan Nuha, Kabupaten Luwu Utara* (Makassar: Hasanuddin University Press, 2004); Pado'e community elder (I-01), interview by the authors, January 2022.

¹⁹ Lebba, Naping, Hamdat, and Arifin, "Social Cultural Transformation in Attitude and Behavior of Pado'e Community," 3.

2022 and Sawedi, then Manager of Government and Social Affairs at PT Vale, interviewed on 17 June 2021.

Table 1. Profile of Research Informants

Code	Informant category	Gender	Age Group	position
I-01	Community elder	Male	Elderly	Pado'e community elder
I-02	Customary elder	Not disclosed	Older adult	Pado'e customary or community figure
I-03	Female community member	Female	Adult	Pado'e household and community representative
I-04	Youth representative	Female	Young adult	Pado'e youth or student
I-05	Youth representative	Male	Young adult	Pado'e youth or local worker
I-06	Farmer	Not disclosed	Adult	Farmer, gardener, or forest-resource user
I-07	Local worker	Not disclosed	Adult	PT Vale employee or subcontracted worker
I-08	Religious or community figure	Not disclosed	Adult	Religious, customary, or community leader
I-09	Community-program participant	Not disclosed	Adult	Participant or beneficiary of a community-development program
I-10	Sawedi	Male	Adult	Manager of Government and Social Affairs, PT Vale

Source: Authors' field data, 2021–2022.

Observation focused on livelihood activities, settlement development, household routines, youth mobility, social gatherings, and interaction among community members. Documentary sources included ethnographic studies, historical accounts of Sorowako,

publications on land and compensation disputes, and descriptions of PT Vale's community-development programs. Triangulation was conducted by comparing interview statements with field observations and written sources. Convergence across sources was treated as corroboration, while differences were retained as evidence of unequal experiences and competing interpretations of mining-led modernization.

The semi-structured interview guide addressed Pado'e settlement history, changes in work and land use, educational aspirations, household and gender roles, youth mobility, marriage practices, mutual cooperation, ritual activities, land disputes, employment, and experiences of CSR programs. Interview duration varied according to the participant's role and the complexity of the account; the original field notes do not provide a consistent duration for every session. Notes were reviewed after each interview, and follow-up clarification was sought where the meaning or sequence of an account required confirmation.

The material was analyzed through an iterative thematic procedure. The authors repeatedly read the interview material, field notes, and documentary sources, assigned initial codes, compared accounts across informants, and grouped related codes into broader categories. Initial codes included land, livelihood, wage employment, education, family authority, gender, youth mobility, marriage, mutual cooperation, ritual, interethnic relations, and CSR. These codes were organized into four cultural themes—economic life, educational orientation, family and gender relations, and communal cohesion—and one evaluative theme concerning empowerment and dependency in CSR. Documentary and observational materials were used to test whether an interpretation was consistent with more than one source. Claims supported by only one interview were retained as that participant's perspective rather than generalized to the entire Pado'e community.²⁰

Ethical safeguards were integrated into the fieldwork. Participation was voluntary, and oral informed consent was obtained from all participants before each interview after participants were

²⁰ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 35–56, <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>.

informed about the study's purpose, the intended use of interview material, and their right to decline questions or end an interview. Community participants are identified by codes. Sawedi is named because he spoke in an official corporate capacity, and the attributed statement concerns the company's institutional position. No separate institutional ethics-approval number is available in the archived field records. Sensitive material concerning land disputes and corporate relations is therefore reported at an aggregate level or attributed only where authorization and context were sufficiently clear.

Results

Historical Context and the Pado'e Community

Before the expansion of mining, Pado'e livelihoods were primarily based on farming, gardening, hunting, fishing, and the collection of forest products. Economic life was closely connected to kin-based labor and access to land, forests, and water. The community's relative geographic isolation limited formal services but also supported a social order in which production, household responsibility, and communal cooperation overlapped. Historical research on Sorowako shows that the arrival of large-scale mining introduced an enclave economy, with its infrastructure and employment opportunities not equally accessible to local residents.²¹

The construction of roads linking Malili, Wasuponda, and Sorowako reduced isolation and accelerated the movement of workers, traders, project vehicles, and consumer goods. Wasuponda gradually became a subdistrict center for economic, educational, and administrative activity. These improvements created clear benefits, including easier mobility and expanded access to schools and markets. At the same time, they increased household dependence on cash income

²¹ Toni Dobinson, Graeme Gower, and Tania Fahey-Palma, "Anthropogenic Impacts of Mining on Indigenous Peoples in Western Australia: Divergent Values," *Ethnicities* 24, no. 4 (August 5, 2024): 635–55, <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687968231219582>; Boldy et al., "Assessing Impacts of Mining on Provisioning Ecosystem Services in a Culturally Diverse Landscape of Western Cape York, Australia"; Rachelle K. Gould, Doreen E. Martinez, and Kristin R. Hoelting, "Exploring Indigenous Relationality to Inform the Relational Turn in Sustainability Science," *Ecosystems and People* 19, no. 1 (December 31, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1080/26395916.2023.2229452>.

and exposed Pado'e families to new consumption patterns, occupational hierarchies, and competition with migrants.

The company established a government and community relations function to manage social development and relations with surrounding communities. This institutional response recognized that mining operated within an inhabited social landscape. Nevertheless, community expectations were not limited to charitable assistance. Residents sought employment, secure land rights, fair compensation, and recognition as communities with historical ties to the territory. The tension between corporate priorities and community claims became a continuing feature of local political dynamics.

Land tenure remains a persistent source of tension in the mining area. Mukmin's recent study shows that land disputes and natural-resource security concerns continue in East Luwu despite the company's use of security policies, community forums, and CSR programs. These tensions are linked not only to legal and administrative weaknesses but also to unresolved historical grievances, limited community participation, and continuing perceptions of injustice among local and indigenous communities. Robinson's political-economy analysis similarly shows that formal recognition and administrative compensation do not automatically protect local landholders when mining authority and bargaining power remain uneven.²²

The persistence of land disputes indicates that modernization cannot be evaluated solely through roads, schools, or employment statistics. A community may receive development programs while still experiencing insecurity over customary territory and historical injustice. Aditjondro's early account of Sorowako illustrates how local residents were pressured to release land during project development.²³ This history continues to influence trust toward both the company and government.

²² Mukmin, "PT Vale's Security and Social Conflict Management Strategy in the Face of Land Disputes and Natural Resource Security Risks"; Putri, "Local Communities and Transparency in Indonesian Mining Legislation"; Kathryn Robinson, *Stepchildren of Progress: The Political Economy of Development in an Indonesian Mining Town* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1986).

²³ Aditjondro, "Dapatkah Soroako dan Tembagapura Menjadi Pusat Perkembangan Daerah?"

Relocation and compensation reveal a deeper conflict over how land is valued. Administrative settlements generally treat land as a transferable asset that can be compensated through payment or replacement plots, whereas community claims also involve livelihood, ancestry, memory, and social continuity. This difference helps explain why a case may be considered complete institutionally while the grievance remains unresolved socially.

Mining development also attracted migrants and accelerated the growth of new commercial centers. These processes expanded interethnic interaction and created opportunities for trade, but they also altered access to land, employment, and local bargaining power. Social relations consequently became more segmented by occupation, income, education, ethnicity, and proximity to company benefits.²⁴

PT Vale responded to local underdevelopment through a Community Development Program covering education and training, health, agriculture and agro-industry, local business development, socio-cultural activities, sports, and infrastructure. Participatory needs assessment was presented as the basis for determining program priorities. These sectors addressed genuine deficiencies in services and created opportunities for households that previously had limited access to formal education, health facilities, irrigation, entrepreneurship support, and public infrastructure.

Nevertheless, listing the six CSR areas is insufficient to demonstrate empowerment. Education and health programs may improve human capabilities, while agricultural and enterprise programs may diversify income. However, their impact depends on who participates, who controls resources, whether activities continue without company funding, and whether land and environmental grievances are addressed. A program may be well-targeted at immediate needs but still leave the community dependent on company contracts, employment, or assistance. CSR should therefore be assessed through community control, continuity of benefits, transparent decision-making, and the ability to sustain livelihoods beyond the mining economy. Community development agreements illustrate why

²⁴ Putri, "Local Communities and Transparency in Indonesian Mining Legislation," 431–55; Großmann, "Conflicting Notions of Land in Indonesia," 644–59; Lo et al., "Nickel Mining Reduced Forest Cover in Indonesia but Had Mixed Outcomes for Well-Being," 2019–33,

benefit distribution, enforceability, participation, and local bargaining power must be assessed rather than assumed.²⁵ A justice-based evaluation must also examine procedural fairness, respectful interaction, and the community's capacity to influence decisions that affect it.²⁶

Pado'e Social Life in the PT Vale Mining Region

The Pado'e population in the Nuha–Wasuponda highlands is concentrated in Balambano, Tabarano, Wasuponda, Ledu-Ledu, Magani, and Nikel. Historically, households combined gardening, farming, hunting, fishing, sago processing, and forest gathering. Although farming and gardening remain important, residents now also work as entrepreneurs, civil servants, company or contractor employees, and small-scale fishers around Lake Matano. Kinship and reciprocal labor continue to support household production and community events, but these practices now coexist with wage schedules, market exchange, and formal institutions.²⁷

Pado'e settlement in the region predates industrial mining. Oral and ethnographic accounts trace migration from Lakari in Central Sulawesi to the fertile Nuha–Wasuponda plateau during the eighteenth century. Pado'e communities subsequently lived alongside Karunsi'e, Tambe'e, Taipa, and other groups across Kawata, Togo, Wasuponda, Wawondula, Matompi, Ranteloka, Liaka, and Tabarano. Population growth and changing access to land later encouraged movement toward Asuli, Kantara, and other settlements.

²⁵ Ciaran O'Faircheallaigh, "Community Development Agreements in the Mining Industry: An Emerging Global Phenomenon," *Community Development* 44, no. 2 (May 2013): 222–38, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2012.705872>; Kung et al., "Indigenous Co-Ownership of Mining Projects: A Preliminary Framework for the Critical Examination of Equity Participation," 413–55; Ubink and Pickering, "The Mine, the Community, and the Chief—Mining Governance and Community Representation in Conditions of Legal Pluralism," 236–64.

²⁶ Deanna Kemp et al., "Just Relations and Company–Community Conflict in Mining," *Journal of Business Ethics* 101, no. 1 (June 1, 2011): 93–109, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-010-0711-y>; Owen and Kemp, "Corporate Responses to Community Grievance: Voluntarism and Pathologies of Practice," 55–68; Putri, "Local Communities and Transparency in Indonesian Mining Legislation," 431–55.

²⁷ Lebba, *Kajian Etnografi terhadap Komunitas Pado'e*, 20; Lebba et al., "Social Cultural Transformation in Attitude and Behavior of Pado'e Community," 3–6.

Before the consolidation of modern district administration, the area was connected to the political authority of the Matano and Luwu polities. The regional upheaval of the 1950s, particularly the conflict between DI/TII forces and the Indonesian military, disrupted village life throughout the highlands. Rural communities were exposed to competing forms of surveillance and coercion, and many households were forced to leave their settlements for safer areas.

For Pado'e families, displacement was not only a temporary security measure. It separated relatives, interrupted access to gardens and customary spaces, and produced memories of vulnerability that continued to shape attachment to land. Christian Pado'e residents were particularly exposed to threats and pressure during the conflict, while the movement of civilians between forest settlements and military-controlled areas fragmented established community networks.

A Pado'e elder (I-01), who was fifteen years old at the time, recalled that a military operation reached Tabarano on 10 June 1954. He and an older sibling were taken toward Malili. In contrast, his mother, siblings, and grandmother sought refuge in the garden and forest areas before traveling by boat toward Tinampu near Lake Towuti. His account illustrates how political violence divided households and made displacement a formative part of community memory.²⁸

The elder further recalled being moved through Mandiri, Ussu-Kawata, Gemba, Malaulu, and areas near Nuha together with other refugees. Because evacuation occurred with little preparation, families from several villages were dispersed and often lost contact with relatives. This history is relevant to the later mining context because land is remembered not simply as an economic asset, but as a basis of security, kinship, and continuity after earlier episodes of forced movement.

Local Political Dynamics and Resistance

PT Vale Indonesia, formerly PT Inco, began operating under a contract of work signed with the Indonesian government in 1968. Commercial production started in 1978, and subsequent contract amendments extended the company's presence in East Luwu. Mining development transformed Sorowako and the wider Nuha-Wasuponda

²⁸ Pado'e community elder (I-01), interview by the authors, January 2022.

corridor through roads, industrial facilities, employment, and new administrative and commercial centers.

For surrounding communities, this transformation generated both opportunity and anxiety. Residents expected employment, improved services, and broader economic benefits, but access to these gains was uneven. The company's presence also increased dependence on cash income and company-linked opportunities, while customary landholders continued to seek recognition, fair compensation, and meaningful participation in decisions affecting their territories.

Prior to 1973, regional connectivity was severely constrained by underdeveloped infrastructure. The overland route linking Palopo, Malili, and Wasuponda via Tole-Tole was difficult, while many villages lacked electricity, clean water, adequate health services, and secondary education. The completion of the Malili–Sorowako road and the later integration of Malili into the Trans-Sulawesi network improved mobility and access to services, but also accelerated migration, market integration, and competition over land.

PT Vale established government and community-relations functions to coordinate social programs and manage relations with public authorities and surrounding settlements. This institutional arrangement acknowledged that mining operated within an inhabited social landscape. It also reflected the difficulty of reconciling corporate production priorities with community expectations concerning employment, welfare, land rights, and long-term development.

Contemporary research confirms that land disputes and natural-resource security remain important sources of tension in East Luwu. Community forums, security policies, and CSR programs may reduce immediate conflict, but they do not, by themselves, resolve historical grievances or unequal bargaining power. Indonesian mining scholarship likewise shows that transparency and consultation are insufficient when communities have limited influence over the terms of land acquisition and benefit distribution.²⁹

²⁹ Mukmin, "PT Vale's Security and Social Conflict Management Strategy in the Face of Land Disputes and Natural Resource Security Risks," 460–62; Putri, "Local Communities and Transparency in Indonesian Mining Legislation," 431–55; Sawedi Muhammad et al., "Corporate Social Responsibility Programs in Mining Areas: Insights from Stakeholder Groups in Indonesia," *Cogent Social Sciences* 10, no. 1 (December 31, 2024): 2357675, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2357675>;

Historical disputes in Kamp Lama illustrate these tensions. Sangaji documented claims by local residents and the legal case involving Andi Baso AM, then head of Kerukunan Warga Asli Soroako, following accusations of unlawful occupation of land used for the company settlement. Robinson's political-economy analysis similarly shows how an enclave model of development placed local landholders in a structurally weaker position. These sources are used to reconstruct the historical dispute, while recent studies are used to assess its continuing relevance.³⁰

The relocation of Karunsi's residents presents another contested example. During the first development phase in the 1970s, former settlement areas were incorporated into company facilities. Sawedi stated that compensation had been paid and that affected households received replacement plots of approximately 20 by 30 meters in Wasuponda. From the company's perspective, these measures completed the administrative settlement. From a community perspective, however, residential plots and monetary compensation could not necessarily replace customary land's livelihood, historical, and cultural meanings.³¹

Mining-led growth also attracted migrants, traders, and workers to Sorowako and Wasuponda. This expanded interethnic exchange and commercial opportunity, but it also increased competition for land and employment and contributed to the sale of customary holdings. The resulting social landscape became more differentiated by occupation, income, education, ethnicity, and proximity to company benefits.³²

Company responses gradually shifted from ad hoc assistance toward more formal community-development and empowerment programs. Education, health, agriculture, enterprise development, socio-cultural activities, sports, infrastructure, and environmental

Robinson, *Stepchildren of Progress: The Political Economy of Development in an Indonesian Mining Town*.

³⁰ A Sangaji, *Inco: Rahmat Atau Petaka?* (Palu: Yayasan Tanah Merdeka (YTM), 2000).

³¹ Sawedi, interview by the authors, June 17, 2021, Manager of Government and Social Affairs, PT Vale Indonesia.

³² Primi Suharmadhi Putri, "Local Communities and Transparency in Indonesian Mining Legislation," 431–55; Kristina Grossmann, "Conflicting Notions of Land in Indonesia," 644–59; Lo et al., "Nickel Mining Reduced Forest Cover in Indonesia," 2019–33.

management became recurring program areas. The critical issue is therefore not whether programs exist, but whether communities influence priorities, whether benefits are distributed fairly, and whether supported livelihoods remain viable beyond continuing company assistance.³³

PT Vale's community-development activities have included education and training, health, agriculture and agro-industry, local enterprise, socio-cultural activities, sports, and infrastructure. The company's 2023 sustainability report provides a three-year administrative series for its Community Development and Empowerment Program (PPM). Reported activities increased from 54 in 2021 to 82 in 2022 and 164 in 2023. The estimated number of beneficiaries, however, moved from 43,205 in 2021 to 15,540 in 2022 and 61,598 in 2023, indicating that growth in program counts does not automatically translate into a stable or proportionate expansion of reach. These post-fieldwork data are used only to contextualize the scale of corporate programming, not to infer the outcomes experienced by the Pado'e during the interview period.³⁴

Table 2. Selected PT Vale Social, Economic, and Environmental Indicators, 2021–2023

Indicator	2021	2022	2023	Interpretive limitation
PPM programs/activities (units)	54	82	164	Counts indicate activity volume, not program quality or durability

³³ Sawedi Muhammad et al., "Corporate Social Responsibility Programs in Mining Areas," 2357675; John R. Owen and Deanna Kemp, "Corporate Responses to Community Grievance," 55–68; Karin Beland Lindahl et al., "To Approve or Not to Approve?" 946–61.

³⁴ PT Vale Indonesia Tbk, "Sustainability Report 2023" (Jakarta: PT Vale Indonesia Tbk, 2024), <https://www.vale.com/in/indonesia/dokumen-dan-laporan>.

Reported PPM funds for the 38-village program area (USD million)	2.6	4.9	3.7	Aggregate spending is not disaggregated by ethnicity or Pado'e household
Villages covered by PPM	38	38	38	Village coverage does not show the distribution of benefits within villages
Estimated beneficiaries (individuals)	43,205	15,540	61,598	Totals fluctuate and do not measure duration, intensity, or livelihood independence
Company-reported local employees (persons)	2,570	2,550	2,589	"Local" is company-defined and does not identify Pado'e participation
Local employees (% of employees)	87%	87%	86%	A high local share does not establish equal access across indigenous groups
Local suppliers (business entities)	251	297	305	Supplier counts do not

				disclose ownership, contract value, or Pado'e participation
Land rehabilitated during the year (ha)	283.7	295.4	224.4	Ecological rehabilitation is not equivalent to the restoration of customary land rights
Cumulative rehabilitated/reclaimed land (ha)	3,249.1	3,500.2	3,703.6	Aggregate environmental performance does not resolve historical land claims

Source: PT Vale Indonesia, Sustainability Report 2023, pp. 6 and 67.

The employment and supplier indicators show a substantial local component in the company's economic relationships. However, they do not reveal which indigenous communities obtained jobs or contracts, the quality and security of employment, or the monetary value retained locally. The report also records additional donations outside PPM of USD 39,000 in 2021, USD 938,000 in 2022, and USD 2.672 million in 2023. The 2023 donation figure covers Jakarta, Sorowako, Bahodopi, and Pomalaa, so it cannot be treated as an indicator of benefits received by the Pado'e.

Table 3. PT Vale 2023 PPM Funding Allocation for the Sorowako Block

Program Category	Allocation (USD)	Share of Sorowako PPM
Education	151,579	4.1%
Health	408,288	11.1%
Real income improvement	348,902	9.5%
Economic independence	963,793	26.2%
Social and cultural programs	210,895	5.7%
Social-environmental programs	106,903	2.9%
Community institutions	169,821	4.6%
Infrastructure supporting PPM	1,321,323	35.9%
Total Sorowako allocation	3,681,504	100.0%

Source: PT Vale Indonesia, Sustainability Report 2023, p. 67.

The same report states that PT Vale conducted social-impact assessments in Sorowako, Bahodopi, and Pomalaa and an SROI assessment in Sorowako. Its impact matrix identifies five affected villages in Nuha and six in Wasuponda. It recognizes employment opportunities, population growth, and changes in local culture as material social effects in these areas. Reported responses include food security programs, real income improvements, infrastructure, and support for local social and cultural practices. The 2023–2027 PPM master plan further prioritizes non-mining agriculture, agribusiness, tourism, micro and small enterprises, the creative economy, education, health, village independence, and post-mining preparedness, with data-based targeting of poor and vulnerable groups. These disclosures demonstrate formal recognition of cultural and distributional risks. However, the report does not publish Pado’e-specific beneficiary shares, SROI values, longitudinal livelihood outcomes, or evidence that customary land grievances have been resolved.

Table 4. Relationship Between Major Community Concerns and CSR Responses

Community concern	Relevant corporate response	Assessment based on available evidence
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Customary land and relocation claims	Compensation, relocation, stakeholder engagement	Administrative responses did not necessarily restore cultural and livelihood meanings of land
Limited services and human-capital access	Education, health, infrastructure	Expanded access, but distribution and long-term outcomes are not disaggregated
Livelihood transition and market dependence	Agriculture, enterprise, skills programs	Potential diversification, but post-assistance viability is not documented longitudinally
Cultural continuity and communal cohesion	Socio-cultural support	Program existence is reported, but effects on ritual, language, and intergenerational transmission remain unclear

Source: Author Analysis

The available evidence, therefore, suggests a mixed outcome. CSR and PPM have widened access to services, infrastructure, economic programs, and employment-linked opportunities. In 2023, infrastructure absorbed 35.9% of the Sorowako PPM allocation, economic-independence programs 26.2%, and social-cultural programs 5.7%. This distribution is not inherently inappropriate, but it shows why program volume and expenditure must be assessed alongside community voice, cultural continuity, and control over land and livelihoods. Recent stakeholder research in East Luwu similarly reports perceived improvement in social and environmental programs while identifying continued dissatisfaction with local labor absorption and community influence. Indonesian studies of mining CSR also show that expenditure and participation mechanisms do not automatically establish durable empowerment. The absence of Pado'e-disaggregated data prevents a definitive assessment of whether the benefits were equitably distributed within the indigenous community.³⁵

³⁵ Muhammad et al., "Corporate Social Responsibility Programs in Mining Areas: Insights from Stakeholder Groups in Indonesia."

Discussion

Cultural Shift under Mining-Led Modernization, Livelihoods, Work, and Market Orientation

Modernization among the Pado'e is not a simple movement from a static tradition to a superior modern condition. It is a process in which new economic institutions displace, reorganize, or coexist with older practices. Appell's analysis of social change is useful because it emphasizes that development may weaken the support systems through which communities manage risk and reproduce social life.³⁶ In the Pado'e case, the key change is not only the adoption of new occupations, but the movement from land- and kin-based production toward market income and industrial schedules.

Extractive industries create social and ecological effects that cannot be corrected by philanthropy alone. Recent research on indigenous experiences of mining emphasizes that the values attached to land may differ fundamentally from the values expressed by mining corporations.³⁷ CSR and the social license to operate are therefore meaningful only when they are linked to trust, environmental protection, participation, and fair treatment.³⁸ For the Pado'e, economic benefits cannot be separated from the loss of access to customary resources and the changing organization of everyday life.

³⁶ G. N. Appell, *The History of Research on Traditional Land Tenure and Tree Ownership in Borneo* (Borneo: Borneo Research Council, 1992); Gould, Martinez, and Hoelting, "Exploring Indigenous Relationality to Inform the Relational Turn in Sustainability Science"; Cristina Yumie Aoki Inoue et al., "Indigenous and Traditional Communities' Ways of Knowing and Being in Planetary Justice," *Environmental Politics* 33, no. 7 (November 9, 2024): 1225–44, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2023.2293437>.

³⁷ Dobinson, Gower, and Fahey-Palma, "Anthropogenic Impacts of Mining on Indigenous Peoples in Western Australia: Divergent Values"; Großmann, "Conflicting Notions of Land in Indonesia"; Rebecca Anne Riggs et al., "Grounding Critical Minerals in Values-Centred Approaches for Just Sustainability Transitions," *Sustainability Science* 2025 21:1 21, no. 1 (August 29, 2025): 305–23, <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11625-025-01726-3>.

³⁸ Konstantinos Komnitsas, "Social License to Operate in Mining: Present Views and Future Trends," *Resources* 9, no. 6 (June 25, 2020): 79, <https://doi.org/10.3390/resources9060079>; Collins and Kumral, "A Critical Perspective on Social License to Operate Terminology for Canada's Most Vulnerable Mining Communities"; Santiago et al., "Understanding the Fundamentals of the Social Licence to Operate: Its Evolution, Current State of Development and Future Avenues for Research."

Pado'e households that once relied primarily on hunting, gathering, farming, and gardening have increasingly entered wage employment, subcontracting, civil service, entrepreneurship, and commercial agriculture. Wasuponda's development into a local economic center encouraged market exchange and new services.³⁹ Previous research on the Pado'e identifies the declining availability of rattan, resin, and forest resources as an important reason for this transition.⁴⁰ Ethnographic accounts also show that some farming has shifted toward cocoa, pepper, irrigated rice, and other market-oriented activities.⁴¹

This transition has both enabling and constraining effects. Cash income allows families to finance education, purchase goods, and improve housing or mobility. However, it also raises consumption expectations and makes households more vulnerable to unemployment, price changes, and unequal access to company-related opportunities. Industrial work introduces fixed schedules that reduce the time available for farming, reciprocal labor, family gatherings, and communal activities. The cultural shift is therefore visible in the changing meaning of work: labor is increasingly measured through wages and schedules rather than through household subsistence and reciprocal obligation.

Education, Ritual, and Intergenerational Knowledge

Before the expansion of transport and educational facilities, Nuha–Wasuponda had very limited access to formal schooling. Only a small number of children from families with sufficient resources could continue their education in towns such as Masamba, Palopo, or Makassar. Historical and ethnographic documentation confirms that isolation and limited infrastructure restricted educational opportunities in the region. Children were therefore socialized mainly through

³⁹ Slamet Riadi, Nur Herliati, and Hikmawaty Sabar, "Studi Valuasi Ekonomi Dan Etnografi Perkebunan Merica Di Tanamalia Luwu Timur," *Bulletin of Economic Studies (BEST)* 4, no. 3 (December 15, 2024): 152–66, <https://doi.org/10.24252/best.v4i3.52782>.

⁴⁰ Lebba et al., "Social Cultural Transformation in Attitude and Behavior of Pado'e Community."

⁴¹ Lebba, *Komunitas Pado'e di Lingkungan Pertambangan Nikel*.

participation in farming, gardening, forest activities, household work, and community ceremonies.⁴²

The expansion of schools and the visibility of salaried occupations transformed parental aspirations. Education became a pathway to employment, mobility, and a higher social status. Parents increasingly encouraged children to study rather than devote most of their time to agricultural or domestic work. This shift is generally viewed positively because it expands opportunity, but it also changes the location of knowledge and authority. Teachers, schools, employers, and educated youth now share a role that was previously concentrated in parents, elders, and practical participation in community life.

Traditional ceremonies have not simply disappeared. Rather, their social centrality has changed. Earlier Pado'e life connected farming cycles, kinship, religion, celebrations, and reciprocal labor in a relatively integrated system. Research on the community notes the importance of mutual cooperation and customary practices before the expansion of mining. Recent mining and Indigenous studies caution against describing such change as total cultural loss, because communities selectively retain, reinterpret, or reposition practices in response to new institutions and pressures. Current ethnographic evidence suggests that ceremonies remain important markers of identity and solidarity, but they now compete with school calendars, industrial work schedules, media, sports, and market activities.⁴³

The present data do not permit a reliable claim about the extent of Pado'e-language shift because language use was not systematically recorded across households or generations. Rather than treating linguistic decline as established, the study identifies language maintenance as a critical unresolved dimension of cultural change.

⁴² Lebba, *Kajian Etnografi Terhadap Komunitas PadoE Di Kecamatan Nuha Kabupaten Luwu Utara* (Makassar: PRS Universitas Hasanuddin, 2014), 25–27; Carolyn Marr, *Digging Deep: The Hidden Costs of Mining in Indonesia* (Penang: DTE & Minewatch, 1992), 25–26.

⁴³ Pongsibanne, Lebba Kadorre Naping, Hamdat, and Arifin, “Social Cultural Transformation in Attitude and Behavior of Pado'e Community”; Bainton, “Mining and Indigenous Peoples”; Boldy et al., “Assessing Impacts of Mining on Provisioning Ecosystem Services in a Culturally Diverse Landscape of Western Cape York, Australia”; Aoki Inoue et al., “Indigenous and Traditional Communities' Ways of Knowing and Being in Planetary Justice”; Lebba, *Komunitas Pado'e di Lingkungan Pertambangan Nikel Kabupaten Luwu Timur*.

Future work should compare language use in homes, customary meetings, schools, churches, workplaces, and youth interaction. It should examine whether ritual vocabulary remains active when ceremonies are shortened or moved into formal public events.

Family Roles, Gender, and Social Cohesion

The family was the principal institution through which Pado'e children learned cultural norms, work responsibilities, gender expectations, and respect for collective dignity. Earlier patterns required boys to accompany fathers in fields, gardens, or livestock activities, while girls assisted mothers with food preparation, childcare, water collection, and domestic work. Previous research describes this strong division of responsibility and the central role of family discipline in Pado'e socialization.⁴⁴ Ethnographic accounts likewise show that family honor and community judgment restricted the independent mobility of young people, especially girls.⁴⁵

Young girls were expected to remain close to home and to travel with relatives. Independent movement could be interpreted as a threat to family reputation, and community ridicule functioned as a form of social control. These restrictions protected a particular model of gendered morality but also limited girls' autonomy. The importance of these norms demonstrates that cultural shift should be analyzed through everyday behavior, not only through formal institutions or public ceremonies.

Gender roles were also reproduced through routine labor. Boys learned responsibilities associated with farming, livestock, and income generation, while girls learned cooking, cleaning, childcare, and participation in women's social activities. Such divisions created strong interdependence within the household, but women and girls carried a larger share of domestic work. Modern schooling and new occupations have reduced the amount of time children spend learning through these routines.

Shared work supported intimacy and mutual cooperation. Fetching water, sweeping yards, preparing meals, working in gardens, and attending neighboring celebrations were not merely chores; they

⁴⁴ Lebba et al., "Social Cultural Transformation in Attitude and Behavior of Pado'e Community."

⁴⁵ Lebba, *Komunitas Pado'e di Lingkungan Pertambangan Nikel*.

were settings in which children learned obligation and relatives maintained frequent contact. Today, these activities have not vanished, but their organizing role is weaker because children spend more time at school and with peers, while adults employed by the company or contractors follow fixed schedules. Mutual cooperation is therefore fading in frequency rather than disappearing as a moral ideal.

Earlier consumption patterns were comparatively simple because rice, vegetables, fish, eggs, and other necessities were obtained from fields, gardens, lakes, and small-scale livestock. Traditional food was especially visible during ceremonies and celebrations. Family authority also extended to marriage, with parents and relatives playing a decisive role in selecting partners. These practices linked household economy, ritual, and kinship. Market dependence and greater youth mobility have loosened these connections.

Mining-led modernization has expanded the space for individual choice within the family. Young people participate more freely in school, sports, arts, peer groups, and activities outside the home. Earlier research on Pado'e social transformation identifies this widening of mobility and decision-making as one of the most visible consequences of contact with industrial and urban institutions.⁴⁶

After school, children are less likely to remain at home to assist their parents in farming or domestic work. They may study at friends' houses, watch television, participate in organized activities, or spend time with peers. These changes reduce parents' direct control but also reflect a deliberate family strategy: immediate household labor is sacrificed so that children can acquire education and credentials.⁴⁷

Gendered restrictions have also become more flexible. Girls can visit friends, travel for school-related activities, and interact publicly with boys with less fear of social sanction. Parents may tolerate courtship within certain limits, and mixed-gender interaction is more common than in the past.⁴⁸ This does not mean that family honor has lost all significance; rather, the boundaries of acceptable behavior are being renegotiated.

⁴⁶ Lebba et al., "Social Cultural Transformation in Attitude and Behavior of Pado'e Community."

⁴⁷ Lebba, *Komunitas Pado'e di Lingkungan Pertambangan Nikel*.

⁴⁸ Lebba et al., "Social Cultural Transformation in Attitude and Behavior of Pado'e Community."

Spouse selection demonstrates a similar shift. Whereas parents and senior relatives previously exerted strong control, young people now have greater influence over partner choice. Parental approval remains important, particularly in prominent families, but it is no longer absolute. The possibility of elopement when consent is refused indicates the growth of individual autonomy and the declining effectiveness of older sanctions.

The overall result is a reorganization of family and communal responsibility. Children spend more time preparing for future employment and less time contributing to immediate agricultural or domestic production. Higher education may improve the social position of individuals and families, but reduced shared labor can weaken intergenerational transmission and everyday solidarity. CSR programs may support education and enterprise, yet empowerment should be measured by whether community members gain independent capabilities and control over decisions.⁴⁹ A critical approach to CSR also requires examining whether assistance strengthens community institutions or creates continuing dependence on the company.⁵⁰ International standards on indigenous rights further require respect for cultural institutions and participation in decisions affecting customary territories.⁵¹ Recent research on Indonesia's nickel sector likewise argues that justice should be evaluated from communities' lived experiences, not only through investment or transition targets.⁵²

Conclusion

Mining expansion has contributed to a substantive but uneven cultural shift among the Pado'e. Livelihoods have moved from

⁴⁹ Nursafitra M, Eka Fitra Ramadani, and Aswar Annas, "Tata Kelola Creating Shared Value (CSV) Terhadap Peningkatan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Kawasan Tambang," *Jurnal Publisitas* 9, no. 1 (October 19, 2022): 75–86, <https://doi.org/10.37858/publisitas.v9i1.184>; Muhammad et al., "Corporate Social Responsibility Programs in Mining Areas: Insights from Stakeholder Groups in Indonesia."

⁵⁰ Tenriwaru, *Kesejahteraan Tanpa Sekat (Sebuah Kritik Terhadap Akuntansi CSR)* (Makassar: CV. Tohar Media, 2019).

⁵¹ United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, A/RES/61/295 (2007)*, 2007.

⁵² Astuti, Raman, and Yeremia, "Putting Community-Centric Justice into Just Transitions from the Global South: The Case of Indonesia's Nickel Sector"; Riggs et al., "Grounding Critical Minerals in Values-Centred Approaches for Just Sustainability Transitions."

predominantly subsistence and reciprocal production toward commercial agriculture, wage labor, entrepreneurship, and market exchange. Formal education has become a central intergenerational project. Parental authority, gendered mobility, household responsibilities, and spouse selection have become more negotiable. Mutual cooperation, kinship, religion, customary marriage practices, and ceremonial performance remain important, but their everyday organization increasingly follows school calendars, wage schedules, formal institutions, media, markets, and interethnic networks.

PT Vale's CSR and PPM programs have contributed to education, health, agriculture, enterprise development, socio-cultural activities, environmental management, and infrastructure. Corporate reporting for 2021–2023 documents an expanding number of activities, substantial expenditure, local employment, supplier participation, and social-impact assessment. The 2023 Sorowako allocation was concentrated in supporting infrastructure and economic independence. These indicators demonstrate the scale of intervention, but they do not establish how benefits were distributed among Pado'e households, whether supported livelihoods remained viable after assistance ended, or whether customary land grievances were resolved. Historical land claims, unequal participation, and dependence on company-linked employment therefore continue to qualify claims of empowerment.

This study is limited by its qualitative, cross-sectional design, the use of anonymized category-level profiles for several participants, and the absence of Pado'e-disaggregated longitudinal indicators. The 2023 corporate data were published after the fieldwork and are used as contextual administrative evidence rather than as direct proof of participants' experiences during 2021–2022. Company reports provide program counts, expenditure, beneficiary estimates, employment, supplier, and rehabilitation indicators, but do not permit household-level or ethnic-group evaluation. The article also does not establish the extent of the Pado'e-language shift because language use was not systematically measured. Future research should compare generations and genders, document specific rituals and language practices, and follow CSR-supported livelihoods over time using beneficiary-level indicators and independent evaluation.

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