


## Social and Economic Development of Koya Village: A Historical Study (2015-2023)

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines the social and economic development of Koya Village, Petasia District, North Morowali Regency, Central Sulawesi, during the period 2015–2023. The study employs a qualitative approach with historical methods, including field observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Findings indicate that social development in Koya Village is characterized by adjustments to norms, morals, and traditions, the emergence of new communication patterns, and changes in intergenerational relationships. Economic transformation is marked by a shift from traditional agriculture and fisheries to industrial and service sectors, particularly after the establishment of the Gunbuster Nickel Industry (GNI) mining company. Furthermore, the development of mangrove ecotourism in Tomori Bay has provided new opportunities for local community empowerment. While these transformations have brought positive impacts such as improved welfare, they also created challenges including dependency on mining, social inequality, and the weakening of communal values such as mutual cooperation. Overall, the people of Koya demonstrate adaptive capacity by combining traditional values with modernity, although sustainable development strategies are still needed to balance social, cultural, economic, and environmental aspects.

**Keywords:** *Social Development, Village Economy, Cultural Change, Koya Village, North Morowali*

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## INTRODUCTION

Socio-economic changes in society are a process of human history that will not be able to survive without undergoing transformation, both due to internal and external factors. In the modern era, villages in Indonesia are experiencing a rapid flow of modernization, industrialization and globalization that accelerates the flow of information, technology, and capital. Industrialization opened up new jobs but slowly shifted the traditional pattern of life. Modernization can give birth to a new lifestyle that is contrary to the traditional values that already exist in the villages.

Social change in society In Indonesia, commonly known as "national development", it includes physical, material, and cultural orders that affect life.(Nuraedah et al., 2024). Changes are also in line with developments that occur in society. The development was put forward by Werner in 1957 who explained that development is in line with the principle of orthogenetics, which is moving from a state that is still global and less differentiated to a state that is differentiated, articulated, and integrated gradually. (Susanto, 2011).

Everyone is sure to experience many changes during their lifetime. Change can be both exciting and unpleasant changes. There are also changes whose impact is still limited, and there are big and slow changes. No people's lives end at any given time. These changes can be in the form of social values, social norms, community behavior or other institutions. (Jurdi, 2012).

The word social has two main meanings, first, everything related to society, for example, institutions or departments that specifically regulate the welfare of the community,

second, the tendency to pay attention to the public interest, such as helpful, generous and caring attitudes towards others. (Poerwadarminta, 1966).

Social changes in the life of the community always go hand in hand with its economic development. Abraham Maslow stated that economics is a scientific field that can solve the problems of human life through mobilizing all available economic resources based on theories and principles in an economic system that is indeed considered efficient and effective. (Lano, 2017).

Economic development is a process that is influenced by government policies in managing resources. According to him, policies that support investment, trade, and the development of leading sectors will accelerate the process of economic development. He also emphasized the importance of equitable development between regions to reduce economic disparities, especially in developing countries. (Djojohadikusumo, 1994).

The social and economic development of the community has also been experienced by the Koya Village Community from 2015 to 2023 has undergone significant changes, especially after the entry of mining activities in the area. In terms of economy, there has been a shift in the structure of people's livelihoods from traditional sectors such as agriculture and fisheries to industries and services that are more financially promising. However, this shift also creates a high dependence on the mining industry, threatening long-term economic sustainability. In addition, people's consumption patterns are increasingly changing from a previously simple to a modern and consumptive lifestyle, such as the increasing purchase of electronic goods and motor vehicles.

Koya Village was founded by the Tolaki tribe community who migrated from the Kendari area. The name "Koya" itself comes from the Tolaki language which means bat, referring to the many bats that used to inhabit the area. The population of Koya Village has developed after the expansion of the region. Based on existing data, before the expansion, the population of Koya Village was recorded as many as 737 people, while after the expansion it increased to 864 people with the majority of the population working as fishermen and some others involved in the local mining sector.

Koya Village, which is part of North Morowali district, began to experience the real impact of regional expansion in this period. The year 2015 is a relevant time to assess the early stages of implementation of new regional development policies and how this affects the social and economic dynamics of the village. Infrastructure and local economy investment In this period, the North Morowali district government focused on the development of basic infrastructure, such as roads and public facilities, which directly affected the accessibility of villages such as Koya. In addition, key sectors such as agriculture and fisheries are getting special attention to drive economic growth.

These economic changes have major implications for social and cultural aspects. The once-strong tradition of mutual cooperation began to decline along with the increasing individualistic orientation of the community. The shift in traditional values and norms is also increasingly felt, especially among the younger generation who are more influenced by modernization. This condition also creates potential social conflicts between community groups who support and reject the existence of the mining industry. In addition, social interaction between the old and young generations has also changed in interpreting the role of family, customs, and local traditions that have been the foundation of social life.

There is a lack of research related to companies in Central Sulawesi, especially those that highlight mining companies in rural transformation in Central Sulawesi. Research on the context of Central Sulawesi, especially North Morowali Regency which is rarely touched, even though the experience of the people of Koya Village with the presence of the Industrial Nickel Gunbuster (GNI) shows interesting socio-economic dynamics to be studied, starting from how the community accepts the arrival of mining companies, and how the community's social economy takes place.

Therefore, this study aims to answer three main questions: (1) what is the process of social development in Koya Village in 2015-2023? (2) how will economic development affect the level of community welfare in Koya Village in 2015-2023? (3) what is the relationship

between the development of social structures and local economic dynamics in Koya Village in 2015-2023.? Thus, it is hoped that this researcher can provide knowledge and learning for the community.

## METHOD

This research approach uses a qualitative method with a historical approach. This approach aims to understand the dynamics of social and economic changes that occurred in Koya Village in the period from 2015 to 2023. The author uses the historical research method to examine social and economic developments because it is in accordance with the purpose of research that wants to understand the changes that occur in a certain period of time. According to Sartono Kartidirdjo, "historical research that has a qualitative descriptive nature using historical methods that emphasizes data validation and must be in accordance with the facts to suit the purpose of the research". (Kartodirdjo, 1992).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Social Development in Koya Village In 2015-1023

Social Development is the achievement of maturity in social relations which is also interpreted as a process of self-adjustment to norms, morals, and traditions. (Susanto, 2011). Social change is a learning process to adjust to a unit and communicate with each other and cooperate to achieve maturity in social relationships. (Collins Dkk., 2021). The process of social development is a dynamic of change that takes place gradually in people's lives which includes the transformation of values, norms, interaction patterns, social structures and social institutions. Social development does not occur suddenly but through stages that are influenced by many factors such as economic progress, technology, education, social mobility, and interaction with outside society. This process shows how people collectively experience changes in the way they live, communicate, cooperate and organize their social lives.

The process of social development is also inseparable from challenges and resistance. Not all members of society accept change easily, some may feel lost in identity or experience social alienation. Therefore, the role of social institutions such as the family, schools, religious leaders, and the government is very important in directing this process to remain harmonious and not cause sharp social conflicts. In general, social development that runs well will encourage the creation of a more inclusive, participatory, and adaptive society to the changing times, as well as what happens in Koya Village.

The process of social development in Koya Village, North Morowali Regency, has also experienced dynamics that are in line with the theory above, including challenges and resistance that have arisen as a consequence of rapid changes, especially since 2015. The entry of the mining industry around the North Morowali area has had a major impact on the social life of the community, both in terms of economy, culture, and social structure. Many residents who originally lived from traditional agriculture to fishermen began to switch to the mining or trade sector which on the one hand improved the economic level of the people of Koya Village but on the other hand caused inequality and changes in social values that were quite sharp.

Some members of the community, especially the older generation and indigenous groups, began to feel a shift in local identity that had been maintained through customs, language, and communal customs. They face a situation where the values of collectivity, mutual cooperation, and kinship ties begin to fade due to the entry of individualistic values and economic competition. This creates a feeling of social alienation, especially in groups that are not directly involved in new economic activities such as mining or trade. This shows that social change is not always enthusiastically accepted by all levels of society and can even cause tension if not managed properly.

In this case, the role of social institutions in Koya Village is very important. The family as a basic unit of society must be able to adapt to changes in work patterns and

lifestyles. Schools and educational institutions in the village are also required to instill the values of local wisdom while opening up the young generation's insight into global change. Religious leaders and traditional leaders have a strategic position to maintain social harmony and strengthen cultural identity so that they are not eroded by the currents of modernization. Likewise, the village government must actively mediate the interests between local residents and outside parties and ensure that the development that takes place is inclusive and fair.

It can be concluded that the process of social development in Koya Village is not only limited to improving facilities or increasing job options but also reflects the struggle of the community in adapting to the changing times. If directed wisely, this change can form a more inclusive, participatory and adaptive Koya Village community without losing its cultural roots. However, if social challenges such as inequality, value conflicts and social alienation are ignored, they can become serious obstacles to long-term development.

### **Economic Development Affects the Level of Community Welfare in Koya Village in 2015-2023**

Economic development is the process of changing a country's economy towards better conditions through increasing national income and improving the welfare of the community as a whole. This shows that economic development is not only about growth figures, but also about its impact on people's quality of life. (Description & Download, 2006).

The process of economic development involves structural transformation, which is a shift from traditional economic sectors such as agriculture to more modern industrial and service sectors. This shift is a hallmark of developing countries, as it reflects efforts to increase productivity and diversify the economy. This transformation requires a large investment in infrastructure, technology, and education, so that it can accelerate the process of economic change. (Boediono, 1999).

Economic development must also be in line with the principles of sustainable development. He emphasized that economic development must pay attention to environmental and social aspects, so as not only to encourage growth in the short term but also to maintain the sustainability of natural resources. This concept is important for a country like Indonesia that has abundant natural resources, but is vulnerable to overexploitation. (Azis, 2010).

Economic development is one of the main factors that affect the level of people's welfare, both on a local and national scale. When a region experiences an increase in economic activities such as the growth of the industrial sector, trade, investment and infrastructure development, the impact will be seen on increasing employment, community income, and purchasing power. This contributes to the creation of more stable social conditions as people have better access to basic needs, such as education, health, housing and public services. Thus, economic development is not only about numbers in macro reports but directly touches the quality of life of individuals.

Economic changes are also felt by the people of Koya Village, before 2015 Koya Village was in a fairly difficult economic condition. Most people depend on farming and marine products, two sectors that are highly dependent on natural conditions and seasons. Agriculture only uses traditional tools without modern fertilizers, without adequate irrigation, and with minimal access to markets. Crops such as corn, cassava or coconut are only used for family consumption or exchanged directly between residents. Fishermen's activities are also carried out simply with small wooden boats without modern fishing equipment or machines. This limitation causes residents' income to be uncertain and often insufficient to meet basic needs properly.

The economic conditions that are very difficult and barely developed make many residents forced to look for other alternatives to survive. Around 2013 to 2014 the overseas rate increased. Many men, even young women, choose to leave Koya Village to find work in other areas. To cities such as Palu, Makassar, Kendari and even to Kalimantan are the main destinations for migrants. They hope to get jobs as construction workers, oil palm plantation workers or employees of mining and plantation companies that develop outside the area. Their main goal is to support families in the village with regular remittances. The village has also



become quieter, especially from productive economic activities. Many children live with their mothers or grandparents while family heads work outside the area. This kind of lifestyle forms a dependence on remittances from outside the village. Although some have succeeded in sending funds regularly, this does not solve the problem of poverty as a whole. In fact, many nomads have also experienced failures overseas and then returned to the village in more difficult conditions than before. This instability makes society live under constant economic pressure.

Changes began to occur when PT Gunbuster Nickel Industry (PT GNI) began to enter the North Morowali area, including the area around Koya Village in 2019. The presence of this mining company brings new hope to the people of the village. PT GNI has opened many jobs in a short period of time, ranging from field labor, security, logistics to administrative personnel and mine transportation drivers. Koya Villagers who previously did not have a permanent job or only farmed seasonally now have the opportunity to work with a stable monthly income. This is a big shift in the economic structure of the village community.

Since 2020, the return flow of migrants has begun to be seen in real terms. Those who used to migrate to Kalimantan or other areas now choose to return to their hometowns. One of the main reasons is that working close to family provides more emotional and social comfort. In addition, jobs at local companies such as PT GNI are considered more feasible in terms of wages and job security. These former migrants not only returned as miners but also used their capital and work experience to open small businesses such as food stalls, workshops, vehicle rentals and grocery stores in the village.

The presence of PT GNI also encourages the growth of the local economy significantly. The circulation of money becomes smoother and more diverse, not only depending on the traditional agricultural sector. Stalls and shops are getting crowded, local transportation services are starting to be needed and rented houses and rental houses are starting to be built by residents who own land. This shows that people are starting to access the market economy more actively. The Village Government is also encouraged to improve public services and community empowerment programs such as job skills training, family financial counseling, and support for household-based MSMEs. With a more stable income, people's living standards began to increase. People are now able to buy basic necessities regularly, repair houses to be more feasible, and some are even able to buy two-wheeled vehicles for daily needs. Children can also feel the impact directly, they are more fulfilled in terms of nutrition, clothes and learning facilities. Family welfare is improving, not only materially but also psychologically and socially. Residents feel safer, more confident and more involved in social activities in their neighborhoods.

The change is also reflected in increased social solidarity and community participation. With the economy starting to improve, people are no longer fully busy with their daily needs but have the time and energy to be involved in mutual cooperation activities, village deliberations and religious activities. Social activities that were once rarely attended are now starting to get crowded again. The Village Government also took advantage of this momentum to build synergy with the community in the preparation of development plans, expand sanitation programs and repair roads and other public facilities.

This condition also gives rise to new optimism among the younger generation. If in the past, the teenagers of Koya Village dreamed of going abroad to survive, now they want to build a future in their own village. Young people began to see that the village was no longer a place to be abandoned but could be a place to build a career and family. They began to learn new skills, become small entrepreneurs and participate in village organizations such as Youth Organizations or joint business groups. This change is a clear reflection that a strong economy can foster social spirit and independence of the younger generation.

It can be concluded that the entry of PT GNI became the main catalyst in changing the economic face of Koya Village. From a village that was previously marginalized and only a provider of labor outside the region, it has now turned into a village that is economically productive and attractive to its own citizens. Increasing income, opening up access to local jobs, developing the small business sector and strengthening social relations have made the people

of Koya Village much more prosperous than a decade ago. This transformation is not just luck but the result of the interaction between new economic opportunities, the spirit of the local community and the active role of the village government in managing change wisely.

### **The Relationship Between the Development of Social Structure and Local Economic Dynamics in Koya Village in 2015-2023.**

#### *Changes in the Role and Social Class of Society*

Economic changes in Koya Village from 2015 to 2023 have had a considerable impact on the social structure of the community. One of the factors that drove this change was the presence of large companies such as PT GNI (Gunbuster Nickel Industry) which opened large-scale jobs, in the past, the majority of the people of Koya Village depended on traditional sectors such as gardening, seafaring, or being daily laborers with limited and uncertain incomes. But now, many people, especially the younger generation, are starting to switch to jobs in the formal and service sectors, and try independent businesses such as MSMEs or local tourism service providers.

This change then shifts the composition and role of society in the social structure. The emergence of formal jobs with fixed salaries in large companies has created a new class in society, namely the industrial employee group. At the same time, people who are able to read opportunities are also starting to develop businesses such as food stalls, water tourism rentals or online sales which are increasing rapidly thanks to the increasingly widespread internet access. Therefore, a group of MSME actors and small entrepreneurs was also formed which indirectly formed a new and more dynamic local economic structure.

The social structure in Koya Village is experiencing complex dynamics. These changes are not just a shift in the type of work but include values, mindsets, and relationships between individuals. The social status of people is no longer determined by descent or age, but by economic achievements, education, and access to opportunities. Thus, social relations that were once traditional hierarchical (for example, based on village elders or traditional leaders), are now shifting towards a more fluid and open social structure but still present new challenges in maintaining community harmony. For this reason, it is important for the community and the village government to build a mechanism that is able to bridge this change. Community empowerment programs must target all social strata equally so that inequality does not become widening in society.

The values of togetherness and mutual cooperation also need to be re-instilled so that economic changes do not create social gaps that divide the solidarity of citizens. Economic change is inevitable, but the direction of the change in the social structure needs to be managed so that it remains rooted in local values that uphold harmony and balance of living together.

#### *Changes in Patterns of Social and Institutional Interaction*

Since the opening of formal jobs such as at PT GNI, people's work patterns have changed drastically. Many residents, especially men, now work in a shift system that takes up most of their time. They no longer have the flexibility of time to be involved in village activities such as community service, hamlet meetings or traditional activities. Similarly, mothers who previously only focused on home are now starting to actively trade online or help family businesses. This change in the rhythm of life then reduces the intensity of social interaction between residents due to time constraints and different priorities.

The change also has a direct impact on the social institutional structure in the village. Traditional institutions such as fishermen's groups, customary assemblies, and village leaders who were previously very influential began to shift their roles. This happens because many decisions are now more determined by new figures who emerge from the economic world such as tourism managers, large stall owners, or project coordinators from companies. The decisions and social discourse of the community are no longer completely dependent on traditional leaders or religious leaders but also on people who have economic power and access to capital.

Economic change was inevitable and it brought about major changes in the way the people of Koya Village interacted as well as in its social institutional structure. However, these changes do not necessarily mean the elimination of old values. More important is how communities and local leaders can reconcile these changes with the social identity that has been

built over many years. Healthy adaptation is when the economy is advanced, but togetherness, mutual respect, and a sense of belonging as a community remain the foundation of a shared life.

#### *Increased Social Mobility and Access to Resources*

The economic development that has taken place in Koya Village in the last eight years has had a real impact on the social mobility of the community. One of the most striking forms is the increasing number of residents, especially the younger generation, who have successfully moved from informal jobs to the formal sector both as employees of large companies such as PT GNI and as independent business actors. Before 2015, young people in this village generally only continued their parents' work as farmers or fishermen. But now many of them are able to continue their higher education, take job training or start new businesses, something that used to be rare due to economic limitations and access to information. The increase in social mobility is not felt equally by all levels of society. Not all citizens have equal access to economic and educational resources. Some families who are still living in poverty find it difficult to send their children to a higher level, let alone access business capital or digital technology.

Meanwhile, on the other hand, residents who have networks or assets first are more likely to seize opportunities and expand their economic position. This inequality is a new challenge in the social structure of the village because it can give birth to social jealousy or marginalization of certain groups. So that the economic improvement in Koya Village does provide a great opportunity for the community to move up social class and access wider resources. This shows a progress that should be appreciated. However, for these changes to truly bring long-term benefits, the distribution of opportunities and access must be taken seriously. A healthy village's social structure is one that allows all its citizens, regardless of background, to have an equal opportunity to thrive. Therefore, attention to equal access is the key in maintaining a balance between economic growth and social harmony in Koya Village.

## CONCLUSIONS

From 2015 to 2023, Koya Village experienced significant social and economic development marked by a transition from a traditional society to one that is more open, adaptive, and dynamic. Socially, local institutions such as the Youth Organization, farmer groups, PKK, Bumdes, and religious bodies have strengthened as platforms for community participation, while women and youth have become increasingly active in economic and social activities, supported by the preservation of local values like *tepeasa moroso* (mutual cooperation and solidarity). The establishment of Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) and Madrasah Aliyah (MA) has significantly reduced school dropout rates and improved educational access, fostering a more rational and open mindset among the younger generation. Technological advancements since 2018 have reshaped communication patterns, enhanced connectivity but also reducing face-to-face interactions. Economically, the entry of PT GNI in 2019 spurred diversification from agriculture and fisheries toward small and medium enterprises, mining employment, and tourism services, raising living standards and reducing outward migration. This economic transformation has influenced social structures, with women's roles expanding and social stratification becoming more pronounced, though family values continue to preserve social harmony. To ensure sustainable and inclusive progress, it is recommended that regional and village governments prioritize long-term strategies in education, infrastructure, and skill development, and strengthen collaboration with traditional and youth organizations. The community is encouraged to maintain local cultural values while enhancing financial literacy and entrepreneurship, and future research should explore the long-term impacts of industrialization, gender roles, and youth participation in Koya Village's evolving socio-economic landscape.

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