



The New Sakai: Efforts to construct the Sakai identity

Pawennari Hijang¹, M Rawa El Amady², Amnah Hadi³

¹ Department of Anthropology, Hasanuddin University, Indonesia.

² Master of Environmental Science in Lancang Kuning University, Indonesia.

³ Maritime Polytechnic of Academy Maritime Indonesia (AMI), Indonesia.

*Correspondence author: azweunhas@yahoo.com

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Sakai Ethnic; Identity; Transformation; Education; Social Anthropology.

How to cite:

Hijang, P., Amady, M.R.E., Hadi, A. (2023). The new Sakai: Efforts to construct the Sakai identity. *ETNOSIA: Jurnal Etnografi Indonesia*. 8(1): 63 –75.

DOI:

10.31947/etnosia.v8i1.24451

ABSTRACT

This study is about the transformation of the Sakai tribe regarding changes in the natural, socio-economic and political environment. The Sakai tribe has blended in with the community, owning companies, and holding political as well as government positions. Sakai now is the 'new Sakai' that is different from the 'old Sakai' stereotyped as backward, stupid, and introvert. The purpose of this paper is to describe the response of the Sakai tribe towards changes through their identity construction. We used ethnography as a method and the data was obtained by living in five kebatinan. The researcher lived at the research location, observed the situation, conducted in-depth interviews and had continuous discussions with the participant to deepen their understanding of the data. The data obtained was then analyzed descriptively by discussing Warren's theory of identity construction and adaptation theory. This study found that the Sakai people adapt significantly to changes in the natural, socio-economic and political environment. One of the sources of this adaptability comes from education, that since the reformation, the Sakai people have massively made educational efforts for their younger generation. This study concludes that every community has the ability to adapt to changes in its environment based on the knowledge possessed by that community.

1. Introduction

The Sakai people is one of the seven indigenous tribes living in Riau¹. Many labels have been given by the government to indigenous tribes, as well as to the Sakai tribe. Muttaqen & Bosniar (2013) convey various opinions of outsiders towards the Sakai tribe. Outsiders often stereotype them as "isolated", "backward", "poor", "underdeveloped", "uneducated", "barbarian", and "scary" (Musta'ina et al, 2017) . This view spread because of the reading sources they received, which were readings written by

¹ The concept of native tribes here are indigenous people, or often used in Indonesia with the term customary law community (*masyarakat hukum adat*). Other indigenous tribes are Talang Mamak, Akit, Anak Rawa, Suku Laut, Petalangan, and Bonai (Melalatoa, 1995).

Moszkowski (in Porath, 2008) in 1909 or Parsudi Suparlan in 1995 and Nathan Porath in 2003 when they were still under the New Order authoritarian regime and at the beginning of reform era (post 1998).

Reform brought big changes to the Sakai tribe. Researchers visited five settlements (*pebatinan*)²; Minas *Pebatinan*, Batuah *Pebatinan*, Sutan Batuah *Pebatinan*, Pinggir *Pebatinan* and Sobanga *Pebatinan*. We found a tremendous change from what was conveyed in books and mass media. *Pebatinan* was revived, Sakai's identity became pride³, and the Sakai middle class had grown⁴. They formed GAPENSUS (*Gabungan Pengusaha Suku Sakai* or Sakai Entrepreneurs Association) *pebatinan*, the Sakai student and youth organization, the Sakai Indigenous Community, the Sakai Traditional Institute, and the Sakai Assembly.

Sakai now is the new Sakai, "Sakai Maju" who are no longer sedentary cultivators, mingling with various tribes in the archipelago (Bosniar and Mutagen, 2013) ⁵. Throughout West Minas Village, in Pematang Pudu Sub-District, in Balai Raja, Pinggir Village and in Subanga Asal Hamlet, there were no Sakai people as in many writings portrayed as backward and alienated who did not get along with the general public.

In Pematang Pudu, according to Justicio & Amady (2021), the family in *pebatinan* Betuah built an integrated farming business on 13 hectares of land with assistance from Chevron company. On this land, they built fish growing and vegetable plantations guided by scientists from universities in Riau. They also built an office building, meeting room, and a place to stay for workers in the agricultural business. Apart from that, this building also houses the offices of five companies owned by the family. The Sakai people themselves call this integrated farming business as a "field" (*ladang*), a term that they used in the past when clearing forests for agriculture (slash and burn). In addition, there are six Sakai residents who have graduated from various universities in Riau and two people are still studying. There are 35 graduates from the entire Sakai tribe in Riau, and one Sakai person has even completed his doctorate and has taught in Germany. The Sakai tribe has also held the position of Regent of Bengkalis and a senator member of the Riau Province and the Bengkalis Regency.

In the Subanga Asal hamlet, which is part of the Kesumbo Ampai village, there is a very impressive Sakai monument. The Sakai traditional house complex with iron pillars⁶ consists of one large meeting hall as a traditional house, one open hall and two small buildings. The traditional house complex is a place for official meetings between the

² Kerajaan Melayu Siak *Pebatinan* is a term referring to the institution formed by the Siak Malay Kingdom (Porath, 2003)

³ Although Porath (2003) considers that the use of the term 'Sakai' now is commonly used, but in their hearts, this term is alien to the previous cultural context. He also argues that it is a product of cultural divisions, especially for researchers in modern Sakai.

⁴ The term 'Sakai middle class' (or *kelas menengah Sakai*) was developed by Anshori (2007) to describe Sakai people who have graduated from school and work in the private and government sectors as well as entrepreneurs.

⁵ *Batin* Pinggir Jolelo openly requested that other parties simply call the Sakai Tribe (or Sakainese), just like the Javanese, Bataknese, Malays and others. He did not reject the labeling made by outsiders.

⁶ Sakai people are not so familiar with steel. Steel in the Sakai culture is used for agricultural tools such as machetes and pickaxes to cut large logs. So, the pillars and supports for the house made of steel are a cultural leap for the Sakai people, while the Sakai traditional house complex is surrounded by customary forest which covers 500 hectares.

community public figures, a place for traditional celebrations, a meeting place for companies, regents, governors and ministers. The Sakai traditional house complex is surrounded by 500 hectares of customary forest (Khamdevi & Dewi, 2021).

Likewise in West Minas, a village that is in the process of becoming a traditional village. The community is very heterogeneous, where only 30% of Sakai residents while 70% are immigrants. The Sakai people have been doing business activities since 2000. There were 21 entrepreneurs who joined the West Minas Gapensus, and have long been intermarried with various ethnic groups from all over Indonesia. The community's economic base is oil palm plantations and permanent plantation businesses.

The transformation phenomenon that occurred in the Sakai tribe was interesting and surprising compared to what happened in customary law communities such as the Talang Mamak tribe, Anak Dalam tribe and others. What happened to the Sakai tribe was a leap of "progress"⁷ in adapting to the market economy. Changing from a subsistence economy to a market economy is the most difficult process for indigenous peoples like the Sakai tribe to go through. However, the Sakai tribe can adapt to the "cruel"⁸ market economy that takes advantage of national and local politics. To some extent, this kind of "progress" is a way to improve the social and economic conditions of their live (Ellis, 2000 and Falatehan, 2017).

Theoretically, the transformation that is happening to the Sakai tribe now is an attempt to construct Sakai identity which has been in process since the pre-Siak Kingdom, in the Siak Kingdom era, and the Indonesian state (both before and after reform in 1998). Referring to Waren (2003) and Andaya (1997), the construction of Sakai's self-identity was formed through a long historical process. The Siak Malay Kingdom formed the identity of Sakai as a consequence of the influence of political relations which were quite strong in the pre-independence era. The inner identity and belief system that embraces the formal religion, in this case Islam, is a form of self-construction that still exists today. Porath (2003) describes the magnitude of the political influence of the Siak Malay Kingdom, especially in placing the power structure of Raja Siak on the Sakai tribe. Porath also proves that economic relations and marriage relations between the Sakai tribe and other tribes in Indonesia give the Sakai tribe an identity pattern. For example, there are Sakai Cino, Sakai Melayu, Sakai Dalam, Sakai Batak, and Sakai Jawa. Waren, Andaya and Porath in this case explain the current transformation of the Sakai Tribe is the result of a long journey in interacting with various communities, which we often know as a historical approach.

In the New Order era, like other ethnic groups, the relationship between the state and ethnic groups only went in one direction. The ethnic groups in Indonesia, especially the Sakai, do not have the power to negotiate with the state (Dove 1985). The Sakai tribe and even other ethnic groups in Indonesia are not recognized by the state. The government uses development jargon to create the Isolated Community Welfare Program. The Sakai

⁷ The term "progress" is used only to describe the adaptability of the Sakai tribe to the market economy, not to the socio-cultural aspects.

⁸ We use "cruel" in this sentence to describe the loss of the economic resource assets of the Sakai tribe of two million hectares, in which only 561,843.09 hectares are left because they were taken by the state and then distributed to the industrial forest, palm oil, and oil industries.

tribe is made a "welfare" program by uprooting their life from the forest as their living ecosystem. The forest belonging to the Sakai tribe, which covers an area of nearly two million hectares, was taken by the state and then handed over to capital, while the Sakai people only got 1129 hectares. This is what the New Order calls welfare for the people of Sakai.

After the reform, the Sakai tribe rose by strengthening the identity of the Sakai as an indigenous legal community seizing the affirmative space that is recognized by human rights, the 1945 Constitution, and other laws (Hijang, et al, 2019; Ismail et al, 2019). Since reform began, efforts to strengthen the identity of the Sakai tribe have become an important issue for political movements by Sakai scholars. There is no doubt that the Sakai people show their Sakai identity. They added the word 'Sakai' to their name.⁹ Porath (2003) warns that pride in using Sakai's identity is an artificial expression because in their hearts this is foreign to their previous cultural context, and it is a product of the cultural fracture they experienced (Marfuah & Amady, 2021).

However, Porath's opinion needs to be discussed because society is always changing due to various factors, both external and internal within society itself. Bettarini (1991) and Suyuti (2011) state that every individual, including the Sakai tribe, has the ability to adapt with the knowledge they have to understand the environmental changes they are facing. Reform brought changes in the relationship between the Sakai tribe and the state. Reform provided space for the Sakai tribe to negotiate with various parties to fight for their rights

2. Method

This paper is a simultaneous part of the Collaboration Program between Indonesia Anthropology Association (AAI) with oil and gas government agency for research and writing on student ethnographic final paper. Initially, we conducted observations and in-depth interviews with Sakai figures, making fieldnotes and research reports. Using several data collection techniques is useful to reduce the bias (Denzin dan Lincoln 2009:495-499).

This research was conducted from May 2021 to December 2021. The author was in the field from August to October 2021 and after that, still visiting the villages alternately, arriving in the morning and returning in the evening. Besides that, we still communicated with informants via mobile phone. While in the field, the author observed the entire village. Then, we met spiritual and community leaders to be interviewed. The results of observations and interviews were then discussed with students according to their research theme.

This paper is a descriptive study of the Sakai tribe in five *pebatinan*, namely Limo Boban Manih Pebatinan, Pinggir Pebatinan, Betuah Pebatinan, Sutan Batuah and Sobanga Pebatinan. The results of these observations were then discussed with previous writings about Sakai, both in the form of books, as well as scientific articles and popular works.

⁹ Misalnya sebagai contoh, nama Iwan Saputra, maka nama itu dipopulerkan dengan nama Iwan Sakai. For example, the name Iwan Saputra becomes Iwan Sakai.

3. Result and discussion

- *The New Sakai*

The Sakai tribe is the subject of debate by writers among the German, Dutch, and Indonesian. The unfinished debate is about the origin of the Sakai tribe. In general, the Sakai people claim they come from Pagaruyung, while a Riau writer, Thamrin (2003) claims the Sakai people come from peninsula of Malaysia. Meanwhile, Suparlan (1995) argues that they comes from Minang Kabau. Moszkowski (in Thamrin, 2003) mentions that they came from Old Malay mixed with the Minangkabau tribe. However, Porath (2003), believes that the origin of the Sakai tribe was very strong in political practices and ideology. We agree with Porath's view because in reality, the Sakai tribe has mixed with various tribes. Porath explains that for a long time, the Sakai people had married the Chinese, and the Malays, and other tribes. Porath's argument is in line with Limo's view that the Sakai people have long been married to various ethnic groups. The closest neighbors of the Sakai tribe are the Minangkabau tribe. Many Sakai people marry the Minang people, so it is common for us to find Sakai people define themselves also as the Minang. Thus, the Sakai language is also very close to the Minang language. However, the Sakai people are still mysterious in their origins. Therefore, based on the interview, some Sakai people defines themselves as the Sakai ethnic groups while other consider themselves as Sakai only (not an ethnic).

The transformation of the Sakai people from a subsistence economy to a market economy is an important issue, because it will reveal some of the problems faced by the Sakai people together and what benefits can be obtained by them. Bosniar, through his poetry, reveals very clearly the process of transformation of the Sakai Tribe in the New Order era, which was published in his article with Mutaqen in 2013.

**Dengusan Anak Desa/Pedalaman
(The Grunt of the Village Children)**

by Bosniar

Dulu hidupku sangat bahagia
(My life used to be very happy)
Walau tinggal di hutan belantara
(Even if I live in the wilderness)
Pagi menjerat malam menjala
(Catching in the morning, fishing at night)
Semua dekat dan serba ada
(Everything is close and available)
Tapi kini tinggal cerita
(But now it is only a story)

Kini jalan yang terang semakin sempit
(Now, the bright road is getting narrow)
Masa depan yang cerah semakin suram
(The bright future is getting dark)
Ratapan si kecil semakin kedengaran
(The wailing of the little one is getting louder and louder)

Dengusan si tua semakin tidak berguna
(The grunt of the old man was getting more and more useless)
Karena hutan yang luar sudah menjadi kota
(Because the forest has become a city)
Ikan dikait sudah tiada kancil dan kijang
(The fish that are hooked are no more, also deer and mouse deer)

Demikian juga Pendidikan dan agama
(Likewise education and religion)
biasa – biasa saja
(are mediocre)
sebenarnya hidup bagaikan cendawan di rimba
(really live like a mushroom in the jungle)
Hujan berkembang panas pun hilang
(The rain grows, the heat disappears)
Sungguh hidup bagaikan sebuah pantun
(Life is really like a poem)
Dedunggu-dedengkok
(Dedunggu-dedengkok - sobbing)
Bersarang di rumbun buluh
(Nests in reed groves)
Kalau mundur ke Ompek
(If we go back to Ompek)
Kalau maju kena Tujuh
(If we go forward, we hit the *Tujuh*)
1998

This Bosnian poem is a description of the life of the Sakai tribe in the New Order era so that the changes in the reform era have not yet been addressed in the poem. During the New Order era, the Sakai people were uprooted from their cultural roots and economic life. The forest area where the Sakai lives is located in 13 tributaries which flow downstream into the Siak River. An area of that size was taken over by the New Order regime as state land with an area approximately 1,982,268.8 hectares¹⁰. Then, the Sakai was relocated in the Isolated Community Welfare Project (*Proyek Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Terasing* or PKMT) on residential land and limited agricultural land. Purba (2011: 169-160) claims that based on data released by the regency government in 2009, it is known that the total land in Siak controlled by the Sakai tribe is 379 hectares, with a total of 1590 households, meaning that each family owns 0.24 hectares, even that does not apply evenly. The poor may not have land since the land is sold to fulfill their daily needs. While in Bengkalis, there are 4670 households who control 740 hectares of land, so on average each household controls 0.16 hectares. If the total land area controlled by the Sakai tribe is 1,119, each family controls only 0.18 hectares in average.

Purba (2011: 239-240) shows that based on 2009 data, the amount of land used by Chevron for bollards was 200,000 hectares in all of Minas. Each bollard used at least two

¹⁰ This amount is calculated based on information provided by Purba (2011) from the plantation services of Siak and Bengkalis districts in 2008 as well as data from Chevron Public Relations in 2009. The number is the amount of land controlled by the company. Future research is needed to update the number by using field verification and mapping.

hectares of land.¹¹ Sari et al (2016: 25) reported that in the Minas oil field, there are 1,755 wells which are connected to five collection stations (Gahterung Sation or GS) and each GS has dead wells. For example, in GS 5, there are 242 wells consisting of 172 oil wells, 60 water injection wells, and 10 dead wells. Batin Limo Boban Mineh said that in 1963, the number of wells had reached 800 in Minas and there were 3,237 wells in over 96 fields in 1990. On March 1999, the number of wells in Minas reached 1283 out of 848 production wells, 289 injection wells, and another 146 wells. Since 1951, Chevron Company has produced 11.69 billion barrels of oil from the Rokan Block. Sukamto, South CPI Operations Manager claims that the number of wells available in Minas is 900 wells, 300 of which are injection wells.¹²

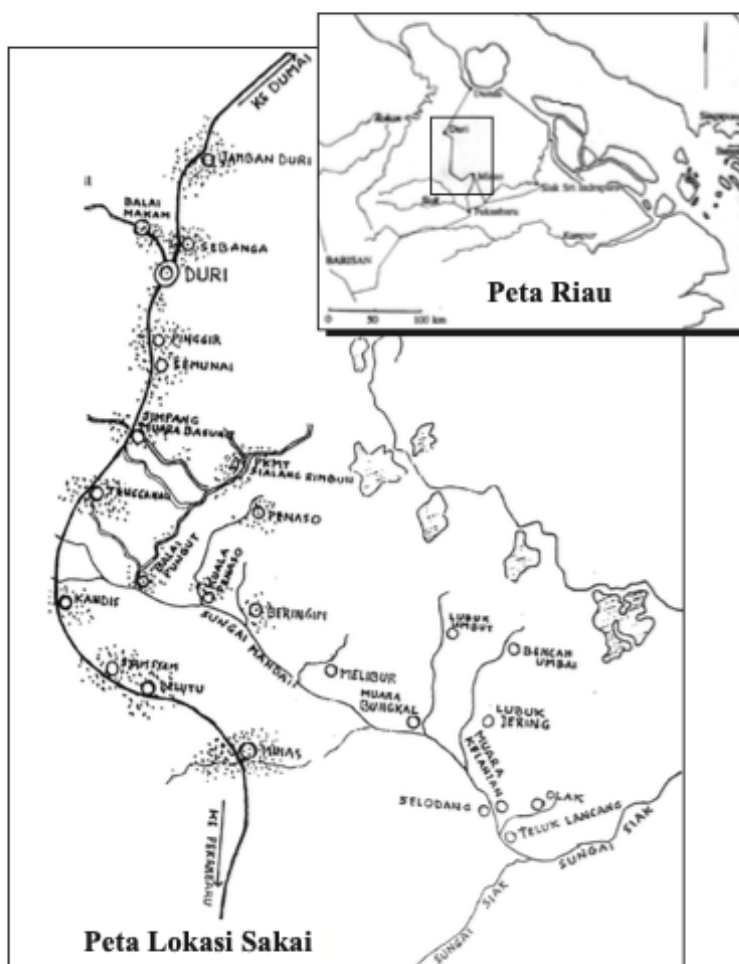


Figure I : Forest area inhabited by the Sakai (Source: Porat, 2003)

Analysis results from Purba (2011; 273-274) shows that the total land area of the Sakai tribe in Siak district controlled by companies from 2008 data reached 561,768.09 hectares, while the area of land still controlled by the Sakai tribe is only 75 ha. The details are as

¹¹ Information about the area of land for the bobbing pipe each has different among others. According to the head of West Minas, the land area used by the bobbing pipe is 50 x 50 meters, while *Batin Bonan Mineh* from *Perbatinan Limo* claimed that the land used by the bobbing pipe is 100 x 100 meters. However, based on the observation, it reaches 200 x 200 meters or approximately two hectares. Information from Chevron Company or now PHR has not been obtained.

¹² Cited from Detik Finance (17/2/2021)

follows: 106,649.43 oil palm plantations, 34,968.66 rubber plantations, 217,000 hectare for industrial forest/forest concession rights (*Hutan Tanaman Industri* or HTI/*Hak pengusahaan Hutan* or HPH) and 200.3150 hectare is controlled by oil companies.

Meanwhile, in Bengkalis, the total land of the Sakai tribe controlled by the company reaches 1,420,500.71 hectares, with details of 272,924.59 hectares of oil palm plantations, 12,676.12 hectares of rubber plantations, and 492,000 for industrial forest. While the area of land controlled by the community is only 445 hectares. The total land area of the Sakai tribe that is controlled by the company reaches 1,982,268.8 hectares, while the land that is still controlled by the Sakai tribe reaches 1,129 hectares, excluding customary forest which covers 500 hectares. The Sakai tribe then lived in 13 Isolated Community Welfare Project Areas built by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Each family is built on stilt houses with a land area of approximately 100 square meters, received 300 hectare of rubber plantation in Kesumbo Ampai village and 500 hectares customary forest. Each family gets a living allowance up to two years. Yatim, an informant said that the Sakai people accepted this offer with the consideration that it would be easier for them to accept various assistance from the government (Dina et al, 2021).

The *Reformasi* provided a better living space for educated Sakai people. Educated Sakai people have a better space by working in multinational companies such as Chevron Company which has now been taken over by Pertamina Hulu Rokan, Arara Abadi Company, palm oil companies such as Adei Plantation, Murini Sam-Sam (Walmart Group), including the opportunity to enter the local business development program in which Sakai people are guided to make companies work on projects at Chevron Companies. Sakai Entrepreneurs formed Gapensus (Sakai Entrepreneurs Association) which covers the whole *pebatinan*, formed the Communication Forum of Brothers and Sisters of Sakai (Forum Komunikasi Putra dan Putri Sakai or FKPPS), the Sakai Student and Youth Association (Himpunan Pemuda Pelajar Mahasiwa Sakai or HPPMS), the Sakai-Minas Traditional Council (Majelis Kerapatan Adat or MKA), the Sakai Assembly, and the Sakai Riau Customary Institution after 2012. Through these organizations, Sakai figures have a place to interact directly with various parties, especially the government and companies operating in the territorial area of the Sakai customary forest. So that the ideas of 'returning to custom' (*kembali ke adat*) become an important issue that is always echoed.

- *The Gift of Reformasi*

Yatim, a Sakai community leader who plays an active role in trying to persuade the Sakai people to leave their fields of nearly two million hectares to live a sedentary life in the program area of the Ministry of Social Affairs in 1977 which only controls around 1129 hectares of nearly two million hectares of the land. Yatim strives for schools in the relocation areas of the Ministry of Social Affairs, which produce educated Sakai people.¹³

¹³ As a result of the relocation of the Sakai residents to the program area of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the agricultural land that used to be managed by the Sakai became a state forest. Then these debts were handed over to industrial forest, forest concession rights, and plantation companies. The forest rights that should have been the Sakai customary forest area were lost and the Sakai people had no more land to continue their lives.

Reformasi is like an oasis in the desert for the Sakai people. During the New Order, the space for the Sakai people to seize affirmative opportunities was only left in the law books. The New Order government, through the Village Constitution (UU Desa) No. 5 of 1979, uniformed all villages in Indonesia so that it ignored the customary governance of the Sakai tribe. Likewise with the presence of Forestry Law No. 5 of 1967 which caused the loss of forests belonging to the Sakai Tribe. *Reformasi* provided a very broad space for the Sakai tribe to express and fight for affirmative rights contained in the 1945 Constitution article 18 and the RUPA Law (about agrarian regulations) No. 5 of 1960. The starting point for the Sakai tribe to move to fight for their affirmative rights began with the *reformasi* in 1999 carried out by the Sakai tribe to seize affirmative space which are part of the movement of the Sakai tribe as a whole.

First, back to *pebatinan*. *Pebatinan* was abolished by the New Order because the uniformication of the village. After *Reformasi*, *pebatinan* was revived and *Batin* has taken on a role as an informal figure at the village level. The movement to return to *pebatinan* is one of the important points of the movement to strengthen the identity of the Sakai. This movement encourages Sakai residents to be proud of being Sakai, as a result of the emergence of the Sakai middle class through education. Each *Batin* bring up symbols of Sakai in their respective territories. In 2016, the Sakai customary complex was built in Kesumbo Ampai, Subanga Asal Hamlet, known as Kampung Sakai. In Kampung Sakai, there is a Sakai traditional house complex consisting of one large traditional house which is a meeting place for fellow Sakai residents from 13 *Batin* as well as meetings with the government and companies. Apart from the Sakai traditional house, there are also four other Sakai tribe's houses.

In the Pematang Pudu Village, there are two Sakai ancestral graves, namely the sacred Bathin Betuah grave and the Sutan Batuah sacred grave which was recently rebuilt by Chevron Company. In addition, there are two places that symbolize the identity of the Sakai tribe, namely the integrated agricultural group complex which is the identity of the 'advanced Sakai' (*Sakai Maju*), and the resting house of the *Batin* which is characterized by the original housing of the Sakai tribe. These two places depict two identities attached to the Sakai tribe.

In addition, young people of Sakai, businessperson of Sakai, and the *Batin* proudly call themselves Sakai people. There is a Sakai student and the chairperson of a student association proudly put the word 'Sakai' in his name. Also, one day, we met a child gathered in an integrated agricultural complex. When we asked him about his origin, without hesitation, he called himself Sakai. He said, "I am proud to be Sakai because my mother is Sakai".

Meanwhile, in West Minas, the concept of the Sakai people has changed. In the past, the right to become a Sakai person was if the mother was a Sakai person, but now both mothers who marry men who are not Sakai are recognized as Sakai people, and men who marry women who are not Sakai, then, their children are still considered as Sakai. In the Pematang Pudu Village, it is not much different. Indeed, according to the custom of the Sakai people, children are considered as 'Sakai' if the mother and father are Sakai, or the mother is Sakai since they are, to some extent, are matrilineal. However, in the

current situation, children can become Sakai whether their father or their mother (or both) are from Sakai.

Second, the establishment of the Sakai middle class. Formation of the Sakai middle class through the education movement for the children of the Sakai tribe. All the children of the Sakai tribe must go to school. Schools have been established in every Sakai village, starting from elementary, junior and senior high school. They also encourage Sakai's students to continue their studies into the university level, undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral degrees. To support the movement for Sakai children to go to school, efforts were made to obtain affirmative policies in the field of education from elementary schools to tertiary institutions. The scholarship must be in the form of a special scholarship provided by the local government and companies operating in the Sakai tribal area. Suhardi, in an interview claimed that without an affirmative policy for Sakai, it is estimated that Sakai children will not be able to compete with other children who are not from the Sakai tribe. *Batin Limo*, an informant, clearly conveyed that if the company does not provide job opportunities and scholarships for Sakai's children, the Sakai people will held a demonstration to the company.

Suhardi and Yatim said that Sakai residents demand special treatment from the government in the education sector, namely: 1) Sakai students receive special funding from the state and regional budget. The Bengkalis government has agreed to provide a special scholarship for Sakai students as much as 15 million IDR annually; 2) prospective students from Sakai residents get a special route to enter state universities without going through a test and are fully funded by the state. This second request has not yet received a response from the central government through the education ministry. However, for private tertiary institutions, especially Riau Islamic University, this special route is provided for Sakai students. So that Sakai students generally study at Riau Islamic University (Anshor 2007:20-21).

This movement resulted in the provision of affirmative-based scholarships for all Sakai students, as quoted from the interview below:

"Right now, Sakai's student who want to pursue their education into a college are certain to receive scholarship support from Chevron Company, Arara Abadi Company, and Bengkalis Government. The problem is not all young Sakai want to continue their study" (interview with a Sakai student, July 2021)

The explanation above illustrates that the right to education is well-available through affirmative scholarships. Even though after graduating from school, there is no guarantee for the Sakai to get a job. However, the Sakai Go to School (*Sakai Sekolah*) movement has become the Sakai Middle Class who has become a pioneer in the struggle to defend Sakai's rights, occupying the good positions (regent, member of the Bengkalis and Riau parliaments, head of Pinggir Subdistrict), becoming an entrepreneur, and working at Pertamina Company and Chevron Company (see Smith & McBride, 2021). One thing that is most important is that the movement to grow the middle class has grown pride as Sakai people, strengthening their identity.

Third, the establishment of Sakai community institutions. Several institutions were formed by Sakai scholars, as stated by Fernanda, et al (221: 67-70) as follows:

(1) The strategy taken by young Sakai at the beginning of the 1998 *Reformasi* was to establish the FKPPS. The purpose and objective of establishing this organization is to improve the welfare of Sakai residents through education. The head of the first FKPPS, Suwardi, succeeded in establishing two elementary schools in Pematang Pudu and in Penaso with the costs and school needs supported by Chevron Company; (2) the establishment of the LAMSR which was founded in 1999 has main objective to strengthen the cultural identity of the Sakai Tribe. The Sakai tribe is very aware that the strength of the Sakai ethnic cultural identity can be a tool to fight for the rights of the Sakai people who were seen as “backward”. The important figure of LAMSR is M Yatim; (3) the Sakai Student and Youth Association (HPPMS) was founded in October 2000 with Suhardi as the first chairperson, a resident of Sakai Pematang Pudu. The main goal is to build friendship between Sakai students and at the same time supporting students in lectures through affirmative scholarships. The initiative for the formation came from Sahrir, an alumnus from the University of Riau and a member of the Bengkalis parliament. HPPMS is carrying out a movement to improve educational progress for Sakai children. The members of HPPMS got a scholarship from Caltex while studying at university; (4) the Sakai Riau Student Association (*Ikatan Pelajar Sakai-Riau* or IPSR) was established in 2001. The first chairperson of IPSR was Suhardi, with the main goal to fight for Sakai children to get jobs in companies operating in the Sakai area. The focus of its activities is training and capacity building so that the skills acquired in the training become capital for Sakai people to work in companies operating in the Sakai area; (5) the establishment of the Riau Sakai Assembly, on November 3, 2016. The first general meeting at this assembly announced Suhardi as the Chair of the Sakai-Minas Traditional Council (*Majelis Kerapatan Adat*) to develop the potential of human resources so that they could compete with existing developments of the world. It will also eliminate the old paradigm of people's perspective of Sakai; (6) the Sakai Riau Traditional Institute (LASR) was established in 2018. It is an organization of the *Batin*, which consists of *Batin Lima* and *Batin Solapan*. This LASR is an affirmation that the Sakai tribe is not exactly below the Riau Traditional Institute. The goal is to preserve the culture and customs of the Sakai tribe. The LASR also wants to emphasize that the Sakai tribe is no longer a Sakai who is left behind but has advanced and it is an indigenous people who still maintain their cultural values and customs.

Fourth, social movements in the form of consultations, demonstrations, and building networks of various parties such as the Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Archipelago (*Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara* or AMAN), Walhi (an NGO focusing on environmental issues), Riau Forest Rescue Network (*Jaringan Kerja Penyelamat Hutan Riau* or Jikalahari) and other NGOs to strengthen the movement in fighting for affirmative rights for their citizens. For the context, the demonstrations and protests among the Sakai community are not new.

Among the examples of movement are on July 3, 2007, the people of Sakai, Pematang Pudu Village, and Sakai Farmers Village held a demonstration initiated by Iwan Basri. The trigger for this demonstration was the discovery of Chevron Company's sewage pipe which polluted the Pematang Pudu river and killed many fish. The mediation of this conflict was that the Pematang Pudu Village received an Integrated Agricultural Program and added five changes to be involved in the program, from ten to fifteen companies, as well as providing scholarships for students in Pematang Pudu. Apart from Pematang Pudu, there was also one in Minas which involved the Sakai community with Ivo Company. In 2019, there was also a demonstration at Chevron Company due to the termination of the scholarship. It is because Chevron Company losing to Pertamina

Hulu Rokan. The demonstration was held at the Office of the Bengkalis Department of Education because the scholarships for Sakai students have not been paid yet at that time.

4. Conclusion

The achievements of the Sakai tribe, who have held government positions, worked in companies, become entrepreneurs with hundreds of companies, supported for educational expenses from various parties are extremely special achievements for indigenous and tribal peoples. This achievement will be the achievement of the Sakai tribe as a community, not just as individuals. However, this kind of achievement is still quite small to give the benefit to the Sakai tribe. The identity of the poor and less educated Sakai tribe is still hard to erase fully. Therefore, the government needs to seriously expand the number of Sakai people who receive benefit from the programs. Likewise, companies that carry out corporate social responsibility should not only pursue company targets, but try to widen the beneficiaries of the program in the community.

Acknowledgment: The authors would like to thank the Indonesian Anthropological Association (AAI) and the Special Task Force for Upstream Oil and Gas Business Activities (SKK Migas) for the funding they have provided on this research.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- Andaya, Barbara W. (1997) "Recreating a vision; Daratan and Kepulauan in historical context," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, Riau in transition 153, no: 4, Leiden, Page 483-5.
- Ansor. Muhammad,(2007), *Kelas Menengah Sakai Dan Gerakan Civil Society, Seri Kertas Kerja JSPDL No. 4 April*. Page 1-33.
- Bettarini, Yulia. (1991) *Dari Hidup Mengembara Menjadi Menetap: Orang Laut di Pulau Bertam Kotamadya Batam Provinsi Riau*. Naskah tesis sarjana Antropologi tidak dipublikasikan, Jurusan Antropologi Budaya, Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta.
- Denzin, Norman K., et. al. 2009. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Dina, U., et al. (2021). Legal Review of the Existence of Customary Land of the Sakai Tribe in Kesumbo Ampai Village, Bathin Solapan District, Bengkalis Regency Based on the Basic Agrarian Law. Proceeding in *The Cross Culture, and Challenge of Sustainability*, vol 2.
- Dove, Michael R.(1985)"Pendahuluan", dalam *Peranan Kebudayaan Tradisional Indonesia dalam Modernisasi*, Michael R. Dove (ed.). Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia.R.
- Ellis, Frank. 2000. "The Determinants of Rural Livelihood Diversification in Developing Countries." *Journal of Agricultural Economics* 51(2):289-302.
- Falatehan, Sriwulan Ferindian. 2017. "Pendekatan Psikologi Komunitas Dalam Memprediksi Peranan Rasa Memiliki Komunitas Terhadap Munculnya Partisipasi Masyarakat." *Manasa* 6(1):66-90.
- Fernanda O.O., Amady MRE, Nurti Y (2021) Suku Sakai Merebut Kebijakan Afirmatif, *Buddayah: Jurnal Pendidikan Antropologi*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Desember 2021, page 59 - 72.

- Hijang, P., Basir, M., & Ismail, A. (2019). Indigenous people's environmental conservation system: case study of Kajang society, Indonesia. IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science, 343(1), 012090. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/343/1/012090>.
- Ismail, A., Yusuf, A. M., & Safriadi. (2019). Lamba tree: environment wisdom and its resistance to development. IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science, 343(1), 012094. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/343/1/012094>.
- Justicio E.D.L., Amady M.R.E. (2021). Sedao Capitalism : Growth of Sakai Enterpreniurs in Duri Riau, *Budapest Internationl Reseaah and Critis Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal) Volume 4 Number 4. Page 10479 -10490. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.33258/birci.v4i4.3089>*.
- Khamdevi, M., & Dewi, Y. K. (2021). The Study of The Architectural Characteristics of 'Umah of The Sakai Tribe in Sumatra. *MARKA (Media Arsitektur Dan Kota) : Jurnal Ilmiah Penelitian*, 5(1), 67-72. <https://doi.org/10.33510/marka.2021.5.1.67-72>.
- Marfuah, I., & Amady, M. R. E. (2021). Contestation for land towards Kampong Adat of Sakai Minas in Riau: .*ETNOSIA : Jurnal Etnografi Indonesia*, 6(2), 252 -. <https://doi.org/10.31947/etnosia.v6i2.18545>.
- Musta'ina, F., et al. (2017). The local wisdom of the Sakai tribe in Mandau, Bengkalis Regency, in preserving forest and river: Symbolic interactionism. *Proceeding in ASEAN/Asian Academic Society International Conference (AASIC)*, 137-144. [oai:ojs.aasic.org/article/284](http://ojs.aasic.org/article/284)
- Muttaqien. Widhyanto & Bosniar , (2013,) Sakai Maju, di Publis di *Acamedia*, https://www.academia.edu/2912003/sakai_maju, di download tagal 1 November 2021, pukul 06.00 Wib.
- Melalatoa, M J (1995) *Ensiklopedi suku bangsa di Indonesia L-Z*. Direktorat Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional Direktorat Jenderal Kebudayaan, Jakarta.
- Purba, B. (2011). *Pengakuan dan Perlindungan Hak-Hak Konstitusional Masyarakat Hukum Adat Sakai*. Diajukan kepada Dewan Penguji Ujian Tertutup Disertasi Program Pascasarjana Fakultas Hukum Universitas Islam Indonesia Yogyakarta: Universitas Islam Indonesia.
- Porath N (2003). *Ketika Burung itu Terbang, Terapi Shamanis dan Pemeliharaan Batas-batas Dunia di Kalangan Orang-orang Sakai Riau* di terjemah oleh Sita Rohana tahun 2010, Pekanbaru, LAM Riau.
- Porath (2008) Seeing sound: consciousness and therapeutic acoustics in the inter-sensory shamanic epistemology of the Orang Sakai of Riau (Sumatra) *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.) hal 647-663*.
- Sari D.A Soepryanto A., Burhanuddin S. (2016). Re-Design Electric Submersible Pump Pada Pt Chevron Pacific Indonesia - Minas Pekanbaru, *Jurnal Ilmu dan Aplikasi Teknik Barometer, Volume 1 No.1 Page, 25-33*.
- Smith, A., & McBride, J. (2021). "'Working to Live, Not Living to Work': Low-Paid Multiple Employment and Work-Life Articulation." *Work, Employment and Society* 35(2):256-76.
- Suyuti, Nasruddin. (2011) *Orang Bajo di Tengah Perubahan*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Ombak.
- Suparlan P. (1995), *Orang Sakai di Riau: Masyarakat Terasing Dalam masyarakat Indonesia* Yayasan Obor Indonesia.
- Tamrin H (2003). *Sakai : Kekuasaan, Pembangunan, dan Marjinalisasi*. Pekanbaru. Gagasan Press Redaksi Tabloid Gagasan IAIN Susqa.
- Warren, J. F. (2003) "A Tale of Two Centuries: The Globalisation of Maritime Raiding and Piracy in Southeast Asia at the end of the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *ARI Working Paper, No. 2*, http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/docs/wps/wps03_002.pdf.