



CHAPTER I

Women and Culture of Orang Rimba

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The Indonesian national culture is the core value of the national system, it is believed to be derived from and standing above the ethnic-cultural systems, due to its function to unite ethnic groups into one nation and one state. Suparlan (2000:58), argued that ethnic groups of Indonesia are homogeneous each with its own distinctive culture and inhabiting an area customarily claimed as their own. Thus, rural areas or villages are ethnically homogeneous, with local ethnic culture as the dominant culture pattern for daily life. Villages inhabited by more than one ethnic group tend to use the culture of the dominant ethnic group as the standard for appropriate behavior in public places, as the pattern for daily activities. Ethnic culture functions in family life and kinship relations, in individual and communal life-cycle rituals, and in personal and social relations in public which are within an ethnic sphere, in rural as well as urban areas. It is expressed in ethnic language, symbols, and manners. The Culture of public places is characterized by core values emphasizing equality, bargaining for one's benefit in interactions, accommodating and mediating differences, and bridging social and cultural boundaries or distances. On the other hand, it is also characterized by competition and conflict.

Orang Rimba is one of the remaining hunter-gatherer groups in Sumatra. Adi Prasetijo (2017:47), stated that their lives depend on the forests, which represent not only the foundation of their lives but also a symbol of their culture. Orang Rimba's existence has been known since the 19th century, some writing has been made about this group by the Dutch researchers under The East Indies government's supervision. Further, Dongen (1913:5) described who in addition to being the researcher was also a controller for the Palembang residency area that encompassed the Jambi area as well, stated that Orang Rimba is divided into two categories: *kubu jinak* (civilized kubu) and *kubu liar* (wild kubu).

Kubu jinak is the group that settles in one place by cultivating the non-irrigated field and is willing to communicate with the *terang* (common) society through *Jenang* as an intermediary, while *kubu liar* is the one moving from one place to another in the forest and avoiding communication contact with villagers.

Orang Rimba has lived in Jambi Province several hundreds of years ago. Orang Rimba depends on the resources available in the forest. Animals, tubers, fruits are all available in the jungle. Robert A, et al (2010: 5), found that the romance of the Orang Rimba and natural resources began to be integrated since the inclusion of other parties in managing the Orang Rimba natural resources. Starting with the presence of HPH, transmigration, HTI plantations which are all located in the Orang Rimba living area. As a result, Orang Rimba who used to live in luxury 'the style of Orang Rimba' must be slammed into the brink of poverty. Their lives are increasingly difficult, the land is increasingly limited and not integrated into global life. This position makes their community weak in various aspects, economic, social, cultural, and political. This condition also occurs in Rimba's women. The condition of them is weak from various aspects of life.

The condition of Rimba's women in Jambi, Sumatra, they have been no empowerment that specifically focused on them. This can be seen from some facts in the field, if reviewed from the economic side, they were still below poverty. It can be seen they looking for the seeds palm to meet the needs of their life. Reviewed from the social side, they were still closed, their interaction only limited to their group. It can be seen from the difficulty of people outside to communicate directly, take a photo, and other access. Reviewed from the culture, they are still strongly protected by the custom and culture that it is difficult to accept the influence of the outside. Reviewed from the health side, the health level of them on average are low, this can be seen from the lifestyle clean in the dress, keep the body healthy, the high number of deaths during childbirth, and the illness. Reviewed from the side of education, there are still a lot of women who are blind in reading, writing, and arithmetic. It looks like many daughters in the school-age did not go to school.

DISCUSSION

1. ORANG RIMBA

Who is Orang Rimba? Orang Rimba is one of the tribal groups living in the depth of forests in Jambi Province, Sumatra. They lead what to some may seem a unique lifestyle owing much to the values and traditions they espouse, which are traced back many centuries ago. The uniqueness in value systems they hold is reflected in their traditions, food they eat, shelters they use to serve as housing, and methods they employ in cultivation. Scott (1985), stated that Orang Rimba's livelihoods that based on in my opinion can be regarded as 'tacit resistance' or, to use James Scott's term, a 'hidden transcript' of the weapons of the weak. They use a variety of ways to make a living, both economic and sociocultural. The Orang Rimba has received unfair treatment from the

state and society for centuries. There is a cultural process that causes the position and status of the Orang Rimba to always be below other ethnic groups in Jambi. Nevertheless, such a marginalization process is not always accepted silently or without resistance. On the other hand, Scott (1992), argued that the Orang Rimba have developed their ways to meet any action they face, or in James Scott's term 'public transcript', does not mean that the Orang Rimba were incapable of resistance.

Tumenggung is the leadership of Orang Rimba, the top leader in the community of Orang Rimba. The organizations' structure in the community of the Rimba tribe consists of below. 1). *Tumenggung*. The leader of the community. 2). *The vice of Tumenggung*. The substitute of the leader, if he was can't attend. 3). *Depati*, the supervisor of *Tumenggung* leadership. 4). *Menti*, to convene people indigenously. 5). *Mangku*. The judgment of decisions in meeting/customary assembly. 6). Orang Rimba, pick up the *Tumenggung* to the meeting/customary assembly 7). *Debalang Batin*, the guide of *Tumenggung* 8)*Tengganas/Tengganai*. The highest decision-maker in meetings or assemblies.

2. RIMBA'S WOMEN CULTURE

Acciaioli (1985:157-8) investigated that the Indonesian state during the New Order regime (1966-98) viewed *adat* as 'art', something to be performed or displayed, excluding any references to religious beliefs and social norms. In another study, Leena Avonius, (2006), identified that the state did not allow local understandings to interfere with the national definitions of religion and social order that were seen as neatly separate from the cultural features classified as *adat*. In a very recent study, Li (2001:657) argued that in the early 1990s, many voices in and outside Indonesia started to demand a much wider recognition of *adat* in local communities. The argument was specifically backed by the growing international concern about the lack of biodiversity conservation as well as the). apparent environmental disasters caused by the exploitation of natural resources in Indonesia. The latter was often part of national development programs that were seen to neglect the well-being of both nature and communities living in the vicinity of resource extraction projects.

Orang Rimba has some local culture or customs, such as *melangun*, *bebale*, *besale*, *tarik rento*, *besesandingan*, *meramu*, and *seloko*. They were very strong hold it's their custom. The following are the description of Rimba women's culture.

1. *Melangun*

Melangun is a habit of Orang Rimba moving from one place to another place in a long distance due to family death. A ritual following a person's death, *melangun* requires people of the Orang Rimba to move their settlements to another location. Walking to the new location, the move can take up to six months. This is done as they believe death curses their dwelling, hence, the need to find a new blessed place. *Melangun* aims to erase all memories and cheer up a sad heart with the atmosphere of a new place. When they have *melangun*, all the families in the Orang Rimba group, all included the Rimba's Women. The occurrence of death at the location of the Orang Rimba settlement is

perceived by the land as bad and will bring bad luck as long as they survive. When *melangun*, all the assets of the Orang Rimba will be taken. All items in the form of cooking utensils such as pots, cauldrons (pans), and mats, etc. Besides, weapons in the form of machetes, belts, and pickaxes commonly used by the Orang Rimba for farming, animal hunting is also brought in to *melangun*.



Picture 1. Melangun. (Doc. KKI Warsi)

2. *Bebale*

Bebale is a customary marriage for the Orang Rimba. There are very strict customary rules governing the procedures for female child marriage in Orang Rimba norm. Rimba's girl when entering adolescence did not know the dating. Rimba's man who has entered adulthood, he will convey to his parents, whom he wants to be his wife. The male family then conveys this intention to the female family. If it is accepted by a woman's family, a period is called a *semendo*. Robert A (2010: 24) found that *semendo* is a man who will live in the prospective wife of the Orang Rimba family. But two are not allowed close together let alone converse. During *semendo*, men must display their best skills. In the form of best hunting and looking for food in the forest. The aim is to convince a woman's family that she is indeed worthy of being a daughter-in-law and able to support her family later. During *semendo* must having to appear convincing as a real man, in men also must appear polite and show their intelligence in mastering *seloko*. The duration of the period of quota is determined by the family of the woman. If they are quickly convinced that the man can support his family, then it is quickly decided to accept him as a son-in-law. If accepted, the next process is agreed upon when and where a wedding will be called a *bebale*. Before *bebale*, women will be looking for some flowers, for seven colors. The *bebale* event is considered the most sacred in the life of the Orang Rimba. The party lasts seven days and seven nights with a variety of forest fruits and animals from hunting.



Picture 2. Bebale**3. Besale**

Besale can be interpreted as sitting together begging God to be given health, peace, and to avoid danger. Marmoah (2016: 149) explained that *besale* is held at night led by a respected figure or so-called shaman. This figure must have more ability and be able to communicate with the unseen or spirit world. *Besale* ceremony is a sacred ceremony that aims to treat a sick member or to reject reinforcements. *Besale* equipment in the form of sounds and dances that accompany the treatment procession.

**Picture 3. Besale****4. Tarik Rento**

Tarik Rento is a punishment for a married couple breaking the rules. *Tarik rento* is done because both partners have violated norm taboos. The customary taboo has violated a norm, if a man is known to have taken various jewelry (beads, bracelets) Rimba's girl. According to Tumenggung Tarib, the Orang Rimba took the property belonging to the Rimba girl to be considered a violation of customs. Attraction must be done in the middle of the forest and far from the Orang Rimba settlement. This punishment is given in the form of caning and others. This rent-pulling is only done in one day, without the use of festive parties or shows like in *bebale* events.

**Picture 4. Tarik rento****5. Besesandigon**

Besesandigon is Orang Rimba who was sick and separates from their group. The term is known as quarantine. The equivalent place must be deep in the forest in an area the Orang Rimba have never crossed. During *besesandigon* Orang Rimba, who was sick, made his house and looked for his own food in the forest. Meetings with individual groups can still be done by adjusting the distance from each individual, but it is forbidden to enter into group settlements.



Picture 5. Besesandingan (Doc. KKI Warsi).

6. *Meramu*

Meramu is the activity of Orang Rimba in search of various types of plants, foods, and medicines. Marmoah (2016: 177), argued that this gathering activity is not only consumed but also sold to villages around the forest. Plants that are used for consumption such as yam and tubers. Plants for medicines such as *pasak bumi (sempo tano)*. *Meramu* is also done by taking or looking for honey in a period of between one to two years. Farming for Orang Rimba is by gardening by planting cassava or yam as their staple food. Today, the Orang Rimba are familiar with rubber and palm plants that are planted near their settlements. Forest products such as rubber and palm oil are sold to people outside the Orang Rimba.



Picture 6. *Meramu*

7. *Seloko*

Seloko is a rule of law that is applied in the lives of the Orang Rimba. Based on interviewed with Tumenggung Tarib (2018), found that the life of the Orang Rimba is strongly influenced by the legal rules that have been applied in the form of *seloko* which are explicitly used as legal guidelines by leaders, especially Tumenggung in making a decision. *Seloko* is also a guideline in speaking and behaving and in the social life of the Orang Rimba. The following form are an example of the *seloko* of Orang Rimba.

- *bak emas dengan suasa, bak tali berpintal tigo, yang tersurat dan tersirat, mengaji di atas surat, banyak daun tempat berteduh, meratap di atas bangkai, dak teubah anjing makan tai* (the habits that are hard to change)
- *dimano biyawak terjen disitu anjing tetulung* (where we make mistakes there is the custom that is used),
- *dimano langit dipijak disitu langit dijunjung*, (we must adaptable where we live)
- *bini sekato laki dan anak sekato bapak*, (the rule of a man or a father)
- *titian galling tenggung negra* (has no stance, unstable)

3. RIMBA'S WOMEN EDUCATION

From the results of observations in the field, several groups of Rimba's Women were found, namely: the first group of Rimba's Women who lived in the middle of the forest. Second, the Rimba Women's group who lives on the edge of the forest. Third, the Rimba Women's group who lives on the edge of the forest is close to the villagers. The Rimba Women's Group can be described in the table below.

Table 1. Types of Rimba's Women

No	Types of Rimba's Women	Characteristics of Rimba's Women
1	Rimba's Women who reside in the middle of the forest	they still holding strong customs they haven't interacted with outsiders, their life depends entirely on forest products, they do not need education
2	Rimba's Women who live on the edge of the forest	they still holding strong customs they have interacted with outsiders, especially in buying and selling forest products, their life besides depending on forest products also farming, some of them are already aware and need education
3	Rimba's Women who live on the edge of the forest close to the villagers	their customs have begun to fade because they have been assimilated into the village community, they often interacting with the nearest village community, their life does not completely depend on forest products they are farming, rubber gardening, oil palm, already aware and receiving education

From the three groups above, it can be concluded that Rimba's Women who need and receive an education are groups living on the edge of the forest near the villagers. While groups that live on the edge of the forest, there is already a wish to go to school for their children, but due to various obstacles so it is still limited to their desires. Groups in this category need encouraged and facilitated by related parties, especially the education office. The group that still refuses education is the group that lives in the middle of the forest. This is due to those who are always on the move for various reasons such as a family member who died, became ill, there was an epidemic, an attack from a wild animal and other causes that they felt were no longer comfortable. Such conditions are indeed very difficult for their children to get access to education access.

Smith-Greeaway (2013), explained that education should have a positive effect on women's cognitive skills. Moreover, Xanthe Ackerman (2015), argued that women's education functions as a force multiplier in international development, yielding economic and social returns at the individual, family, and societal levels. In another study, Abigail

Weitzman (2017), investigated that greater cognitive skills, and especially literacy, should benefit maternal health by increasing women's ability to seek information about their health and by assuring that women are better able to follow written instructions (such as, understanding directions on a box of medication).

Education for Orang Rimba has not become a primary need. The problem that women's education in Orang Rimba is poverty. In most households, when mothers were pressured to offer for their families, it was the girls who assisted. In most female-headed households of Orang Rimba, daughters are expected to deputize for their mothers and to offer for some needs of the family.

Hen Jeanne (1984) identified that Women usually carried out most of the major farming tasks breaking up the soil, planting, weeding, harvesting, and carrying the harvest home. From this perspective, it is clear that women's roles in agricultural production were and are highly significant in terms of their contributions to the economy. In another study, Christine Heward & Sheila W (1999), argued that the activities expected of rural women in the family and her community tend to be similar, including home-making, childbearing, gardening, livestock rearing, producing food, and handicrafts and operating small businesses. Most of all, the identity woman is about being a wife and mother. Rimba's women along with the times and demands to interact with outside their community they need education for their children. Three types of education are followed by Rimba's Girls, namely informal education, formal education, and non-formal education.

a. Informal Education

Informal education of Rimba's women is presented in the table below.

Table 2. Informal Education of Rimba's Women.

No	Types of Informal Education	Descriptions
1	Home Education	cooking, taking care of household
2	Social Education	communication with inside and outside of the community
3	Economic Education	hunting, gathering, cultivating for survive
4	Skills Education	sewing, weaving rattan, knitting
5	Religious Education	spells, prayers, offering to God
6	Culture Education	dancing, singing, <i>seloka</i> for traditional ceremonies
7	Health Education	personal hygiene, environmental cleanliness
8	School Education	allowed for school and the importance of learning



Picture 7. Informal Education

In addition to attending informal education, Rimba's women also attend formal education and non-formal education.

b. Formal Education

Cohn (1979:2) argued that education is the process of training and developing knowledge, skill, mind, character, etc, especially by formal schooling. On the other hand, UNESCO (1999), explained that Although formal education has several limitations, it has nevertheless an empowering element. It is through formal education that people enter the professional or political elite, albeit in small numbers. On the other hand non-formal education is in a better position to challenge the status quo. In very a recent study, D Sambangi (2009) investigated the education is a potent tool in the emancipation and empowerment of women. Besides that UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, identified indigenous peoples have the right to the full enjoyment, as a collective or as individuals, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International human rights law.

Rimba's girls are still few who attend formal education, due to several obstacles in its implementation. Geographical factors, they live in the forest so there is no transportation. Social factors have limitations in interacting with outside communities. Cultural factors, Rimba's women are still strong in holding their customs, they believe that attending education will change their customs. Economic factors, Rimba's child helps their parent make a living by participating in hunting, gathering, farming, and other activities. From the safety factor, many wild animals and outsiders are considered to be life-threatening, especially their children.

The Orang Rimba community, who live on the edge of the forest, have partially been able to receive an education. They allow Rimba's girls to attend education at the nearest elementary school. Because the location of the forest edge is close to the transmigration area and the local population, it's easy their access.



Picture 8. Formal Education

c. Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education program which is followed by Rimba's women is an education program organized by KPA Sokola and KKI Warsi. Based on the data obtained from KPA Sokola and KKI Warsi, their programs of education for Rimba's children are:

1. Introduce and develop basic material to read, write and count
2. Appreciating the creativity and local publication of children, adolescents, and adults with media and writing.
3. Develop local crafts/skills with existing traditional resources.
4. Environmental Education with some basic traditional community wisdom.
5. Health education, sanitation, and environmental hygiene.
6. Move the business and try to maintain the living area/pressure that comes from outside.
7. Participatory mapping of the Orang Rimba living area.
8. Developing effective and efficient farming techniques.
9. Assistance



Picture 9. Non Formal Education

4. Empowering of Rimba's Women

The gender and development approach also draws in the impact of a country's sociocultural context. Traditional ideas about the household division of labor signify women as responsible for non-paid care tasks (Baxter, Hewitt, & Western, 2009; Lyberaki, 2011), and across the world, gendered norms on paid and unpaid labor exist (Andringa, Nieuwenhuis, & Van Gerven, 2015). Kindervatter (2005:209), states that people gaining an understanding of and control over social, economic, and/or political force to improve

their standing in society. In other words, an empowering process is oriented toward influencing socio-economic structures and relationships through group action tracking. In another study, Stromquist (1993) described that:

Empowerment is a four-dimensional process and that to act as equal participants in development, women have to be empowered in these four dimensions: cognitive, psychological, economic, and political. Cognitive empowerment is the ability to critically review one's experiences to notice or identify patterns of behavior that lead to dependence and hence reinforce subordination. Psychological empowerment is concerned with women's feelings and the belief that they can change their situation themselves. Economic empowerment involves the ability for women to engage in income-generating activities that will enable them to have access to an independent income. Political empowerment entails the ability to analyze situations politically and to mobilize for social change.

The process of empowerment, Kindervatter (2005:209), found that people gaining an understanding of and control over social, economic, and/or political force to improve their standing in society. In other words, an empowering process is oriented toward influencing socio-economic structures and relationships through group action tracking. In a follow-up study, Stromquist (1993) evaluated the economic empowerment involves the ability for women to engage in income-generating activities that will enable them to have access to independent income'. This statement indicated that there are some similarities of economic empowerment of women's activities in their families and groups of Orang Rimba to an independent income.

Based on some problems of Rimba's women, there are several alternatives to empowering Rimba's women. First, psychologically empowered because they still are ashamed, inferior, and afraid. Psychological empowerment is able to turn into confidence, struggle well with their groups, or with the outside the community. Second, socially empowered, they have problems of difficult to communicate with the outsider. Socially empowered can be done both with their group or with the outside community. Third, economically empowered, they are able to meet their needs and can be independent. Fourth, politically empowered, they can make their own decisions about their lives.



Picture 10. Empowering of Rimba's Women

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the whole descriptions above, can be conveyed the conclusions to the various parties as follows: *First*, The condition of Rimba's women in Jambi, Sumatra, they have been no empowerment that specifically focused on them. This can be seen from some facts the economic, the social, the culture, the health, and the education sides. *Second*, Orang Rimba has some local culture or customs, such as *melangun*, *bebale*, *besale*, *tarik rento*, *besesandingon*, *meramu*, and *seloko*. They were very strong hold it's their custom. *Third*, three types of education are followed by Rimba's Girls, namely informal education, formal education, and non-formal education. *Fourth*, there are several alternatives of empowering Rimba's women, they are: psychologically empowered, socially empowered, economically empowered, and politically empowered.

Recommendations

Based on the whole descriptions and conclusions can be conveyed the recommendations to the various parties as follows: First, to improve the empowerment Rimba's women, the Department of Education of Jambi Province and all the districts of Jambi Province to be able to increase the attention and support for education to more applicable. Second, to improve the empowerment Rimba's women, the government policy should be serious about education policy for Rimba's tribe, especially for Rimba's women. Third, the communities are expected to be able to play an active role in providing input and support, both moral and spiritual in overcoming women's education problems. In this case, they can cooperate with the department of education and the related institutions in improving the empowering Rimba's women through education and culture.

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