

THE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIES BY THE ORANG ASLI TEMIAR AT KUNTAI PERAK IN RESPONSE TO EXPLOITATION BY TRADERS

AMIR ZAL, W. A.^{1*} AND REDZUAN, M.²

¹Department of Social Ecology, Faculty of Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu. ²Department of Social Sciences and Development, Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia.

*Corresponding author: waamirzal@umt.edu.my

Abstract: The Orang Asli remains as a stereotyped group which has been isolated from the mainstream society. The problem occurred due to their placement in interior areas. For the Orang Asli, that particular location is an extra point for them because they can access a variety of forest resources. Meanwhile, traders see this as their opportunity to make money by exploiting the Orang Asli. With an awareness of the matter, a study had been conducted to describe the extent of exploitation and how the Orang Asli manage and develop strategies in response to the exploitation. To explore the issue, this study was performed on the Orang Asli tribes in the village of Kuntai in Perak, using qualitative approach and ethnographic design. Data was collected through two methods, which were non-participant observation and in-depth interviews. The data were coordinated by using QSR NVivo computer software. The findings were extracted using narrative techniques. The findings indicate the act of exploitation by the traders. The study also provides ways to manage and create strategies when dealing with the exploitation of the Orang Asli.

KEYWORDS: The Orang Asli forest produces, The Orang Asli exploitation, forest produce traders, forest exploitation, managing exploitation

Introduction

The Orang Asli are closely related to the environment and it is very difficult to separate them from their environment. Familiarity has caused them to either epithet as *Orang Hutan* (the forestman) (Nobuta, 2009), or *Orang Laut* (The Sea) (Andaya, 2008). For example, Orang Kuala and Orang Seletar are known as the Orang Laut for their dependable daily lives on the marine environment (Dentan, 1968; Carey, 1976). The Orang Asli *Laut* also includes the tribe of Mah Meri or Ma' Betisék; those who live in the mangrove environment and depend on agriculture and marine products (Wazir-Jahan, 1981).

Since the majority of the Orang Asli's daily activities take place in the forest and the ocean, their knowledge and skills are closely connected to the environment. Through it, they acquire various forms of intelligence such as finding the cane, herbs, hunting and fishing (Skeat & Blagden, 1966; Ramle Abdullah, 1993). In fact, most of their life's requirements are derived

from these sources (Ma'rof Redzuan & Zahid Emby, 2008). Knowledge, skills and ownership of the forest and the sea resources are not only being used by the Orang Asli, but also by society at large. Through environmental and forestry knowledge among the Orang Asli, interior traders are reaping huge profits by selling them. It clearly shows that the occurrence of acts of exploitation upon the interior community towards the Orang Asli is by those acting as middlemen (hereinafter the middlemen in this article will be referred to by the term traders) in obtaining and using the Orang Asli knowledge and skills.

This exploitative relationship has been reported by Cerruti (1908) and Skeat and Blagden (1966). Generally, the traders (which consist of Malay and Chinese) supply low-quality goods (such as tobacco, salt, iron, and betel nut) to the Orang Asli, but at a high price. In contrast, the Orang Asli's forestry products (such as resin, wood and rattan) are cheaply bought, at an estimated 100 to 400 percent lower than the market prices. This transaction, known as an

unbalanced exchange system causes the Orang Asli to be in debt which eventually make them become slaves or servants to the traders. Although it is negative and unethical, it cannot be avoided. According to Rambo (1979), the sale of forest products is a part of the activities that provide sources of income for the Orang Asli who live in both periphery and forest.

The issues of exploitation

The Orang Asli are no longer isolated (marginalised), but have been exposed to the mainstream community. Since early times, products from forests have been marketed outside their area. Since time immemorial, the Orang Asli have been aware that their environment, including the forest, has produced desirable interior communities (Tuck-Po, 2005). Thus, the situation has changed the behaviour of the Orang Asli in terms of the usage of forestry products. The Orang Asli began to change their way of life, from the use of forestry products only for subsistence, to sell them outside to make money. This phenomenon has been occurring since the involvement of the Orang Asli in the forestry products' trade. Meanwhile, in the case of the Orang Asli, although they have been exposed to the outside context of their community work, the forest still is the main source of income for them. However, when they realised that the forestry products produced by them bring more profits to the middleman, they felt that they were oppressed and exploited.

Many studies conducted by previous researchers (such as Cerruti, 1908 and Skeat and Blagden, 1966), showed an exchange of inequalities or unequal exchange between the traders and the Orang Asli. Inequality change is when traders buy the Orang Asli forestry products at a price lower than the actual price value. In contrast, the Orang Asli buys essential goods from the traders at a price more expensive than the actual price. As a result, they try to develop strategies in response to the act of exploitation done by traders, with certain rules. Thus, this study attempts to answer two main questions, namely, does an exploitation of the Orang Asli exist and how does the Orang Asli manage and develop strategies in response to the acts of exploitation?

From personal consumption to the traders

The Orang Asli are still engaged in traditional economic sectors directly related to the forest (Ghazali *et al.*, 1995, Hood 2002; Gianni & Bayr 2009). The activities are hunting, fishing, collecting and gathering the forestry products (Rambo, 1979). Dentan (1962) has led to a typical example in discussing the economic affairs of the Orang Asli community. According to him, in the early stages, the Orang Asli's economical system differed from outsiders, especially the economical system of industrial society. For example, fest products such as pigs rose among the members of the Orang Asli community and would be distributed equally to everyone for free.

The value now is completely different to the reality of the industry-based society. Industrial society distributes their products with a hope that they will get paid commensurately with their money grants in the form of money as the primary medium of exchange. If the consideration received is not commensurate with the distributed products, they assume that the exchanges have occurred fraudulently. Instead, in the Orang Asli community, the provision by community members to other community members is not being paid, even through a simple thank you.

History has recorded that the lands in this country have been trafficked across the world since immemorial time (Dunn, 1975; Gianni & Bayr, 2009; Nicholas, Chopil & Sabak, 2003). Trading requires forestry products such as resin, wood, sandalwood and some others as the main economic focus to promote economic development. These sources are mostly in forests which are inhabited by the Orang Asli. Thus the Orang Asli services are needed to supply forest products to the interior community.

At the beginning, dissemination of the Orang Asli forestry products to the outside community was not based on commercial exchange but in the form of exchange of goods. It continued to occur until the 19th century (Dunn, 1975). However, the trend has changed since Ramle Abdullah (1993) visited the interior communities. As the impact upon the event of emergency in 1948, the Orang Asli began to be economically exposed to money, in which money was needed to meet the essential items that cannot be derived from forestry resources. However, it was not the only

consequence, as according to Rambo (1979), the interaction through economic activities which include conversion of forestry products has increased the dependency of the Orang Asli upon the forest for interior products.

Exploitation of the Orang Asli by the traders

The Orang Asli's advantages of exploring and gathering forestry products have been exploited by the traders. Skeat and Blagden (1966) and Rambo (1979) did not deny the existence of exploitation, such as an act of taking the Orang Asli's forestry products at low prices. It is done by traders among the Malays and Chinese (Gomes, 2004). For Gomes (2004), exploitation occurs due to the nature of the Orang Asli who are particularly naive and have a passive relationship with the traders. Unfortunately, the Orang Asli did realise that they have been cheated but they chose not to complain because of fear of being harassed by the traders or of causing other problems. Moreover, the Orang Asli dislike conflict or violence (Dentan, 1968).

The pressing problem of the exploitation of the Orang Asli rises since they were introduced to a monetary economic system. Their needs can only be obtained if they had money. As a result, people began to actively participate in naturally disseminating their forest products to the interior community. However, it raises the problem of exploitation, especially in term of pricing. Their forestry products are often taken by traders with cheap prices and sold at higher prices (Cerruti, 1908 & Ramle Abdullah, 1993).

With regard to those frauds in the sale of forest products, Gomes (2004) states that the exploitation of the Orang Asli exists in various forms, such as weight reduction and inaccurate calculations by traders. The situation was stated by Dunn (1976); The Orang Asli were unable to influence the bargaining process while at the same time they were desperate to sell their forestry products to avoid any damages. Additionally, they received late payments even though those forestry products have been collected by traders.

Another form of exploitation of the Orang Asli is by an act of cheating the amount of debt incurred by the Orang Asli. The Orang Asli often have debts toward the traders, because they need

to obtain food sources such as rice, canned fish, cloth gloves, machetes, kerosene and other necessities of survival in the forest (Carey, 1976; Rambo, 1979). The money raised from the sale of their products was used to buy goods offered by the traders. However, the amount of money was not enough to purchase those products and consequently, they had to buy them by debt from traders (Carey, 1976). Thus, the debt of the Orang Asli towards the traders is doubled (Gomes, 2004).

According to Carey (1976), the exploitation often occurs when the payment was made. If there were more than one person involved when the Orang Asli provided their products, payment should be given to the entire involved group. This literature review indicates that there was an exploitation of the Orang Asli in relation to the outside communities. However, the literature review rarely stated how the Orang Asli reacts to these exploitations.

Research Methodology

This study was conducted in the village of the Orang Asli Kuntai located in Lasah, Sungai Siput, Perak. The study has been carried out using a qualitative approach and the practice of ethnographic design. Researchers consider two main aspects of the design practice which are a requirement to review the actual situation and the need to obtain data without interrupting their under reviewed studies. The survey data were collected by two methods of study: non-participant observation and in-depth interviews.

Observations were made on Kuntai Orang Asli's forestry activities, which include the activity of collecting bamboo. Researchers also interviewed ten the Orang Asli who were involved in collecting and selling bamboo products. An applied research technique has been used for the protocol in-depth interviews. Next, the researchers considered the types of protocols needed for the interview session in this study. Researchers chose to use the protocol of semi-structured interview. This protocol allows researchers to add or change the research question which can be developed during the course of interviewing the informants of the study (Othman Lebar, 2009). The rationale for

the researchers for choosing this type of protocol is the ability to obtain in-depth information, with a specific user. It is necessary to explore the research in depth, to ensure that each variable is understandable and properly measured by the produced questionnaires later. This particular type of protocol also allows researchers to investigate the course of their interview activities in detail (Walliman, 2006).

After interviewing the informants, researchers have been transcribing the recorded conversations. Transcription is carried out based on verbatim; a method in which each word spoken by informants is converted into texts. Those transcribed texts have been coordinated and analysed by QSR NVivo computer software. Similarly, the researchers noted the observation post. Researchers have developed an open code from the obtained raw data and next, the code is placed in the same group. At the same time, the open code has been screened to avoid duplication of code. Later, researchers categorised and formed groups into specific themes based on the research objectives. The process was done through the function of free and tree nodes QSR NVivo and the findings showed by using narrative techniques.

Findings and Discussion

Background

The Orang Asli Kuntai village is also known as Kotai. The village is classified as one of the interior villages based on the criteria set out by the Department of the Orang Asli Affairs (JHEOA). The criteria are the trail, no clean water, no 24 hours electricity and no other basic amenities (Zainal Abidin, 2008). The distance between Kuntai and the Orang Asli villages to the town is about 45 to 50 miles, which takes nearly four hours. However, the time period varies according to soil and weather conditions. The journey was through the streets in the hills, red earth, trails and rock hill.

There are fifteen other Orang Asli villages along the journey to get to the village. Those villages are Bawong, Kajang, Saseh, Kemores, Cemakah, Santih, Jai, Chua'ant, Pos Legap,

Rengkeh, Dawoi, Ke'ep, Mendet, Ma'ngis and Youm. Majority of the Orang Asli population consists of the Orang Asli Temiar, sub-tribe of the Senoi tribe. The other name for the Orang Asli Temiar is *Seng-oi Temiar Bearq*. The village's population was over 119 people consisting of 22 heads of households. The number of members per household is five people.

The Orang Asli products

The Orang Asli Kuntai's production can be categorised into two forms: commodity production and subsistence production. This categorisation adopted the concept made by Gomes (2004). Subsistence production is seen through the efforts of the Orang Asli in collecting and producing resources for their own use. Commodity production refers to the products obtained to be marketed (sold) to other communities. However, this study only focused on the production of commodities.

The commodity productions undertaken by the Orang Asli Kuntai are bamboo, petai, aloes wood, herbs and cocoa crops. Bamboo products are the major forest products that generate income for them. Bamboo is used for agriculture, production of brooms and tools outside the community. Bamboo collection is carried out in groups; a form of small groups contained two to five people each. Groups are usually formed based on three categories: family members only, not the family members but consists of partners, and a mixture of both family and non-family members. However, many of them went out on the search for bamboo together with their family members. Even then, the women, especially mothers, are rarely involved in these activities. The Orang Asli will only go into the forests on certain days, depending on several considerations of weather, the supply of bamboo, bamboo and distance requests. With regard to climate, the act of collecting bamboo is influenced by the weather. This is due to the fact that weather gives two main effects to their efforts: the difficulty in collecting and carrying bamboo out and the difficulty for others to come by at their doorsteps to buy bamboo.

The level of bamboo's supply is another factor for the Orang Asli to consider when deciding whether or not to enter the forest to

collect bamboos. Since bamboos are not being planted in Arboricultural, bamboos were often taken by the Orang Asli and the source decreases. However, the Orang Asli are perfectly aware of those circumstances. Therefore, to ensure that bamboo supply does not run out, the Orang Asli uses two methods: select the right bamboo for employment and enter only certain areas for a period of time.

With respect to the demands of bamboo, they have been supplied to traders if requested. The Orang Asli Kuntai has experienced some realities: their bamboos were damaged due to weather constraints as the traders did not enter their village to buy the collected bamboos. Taking lessons from the experience of such events, the Orang Asli now act more carefully based on three considerations: preventing their bamboos from being damaged, ensuring the resources taken are not detrimental to the forest and comparing efforts made by them.

In addition, there is also another factor which the Orang Asli considered when entering the forest to collect forestry products; the necessary distance to get bamboos. In similar consideration, the fact that bamboo is being planted in Arboricultural makes it prudent for the Orang Asli to accumulate the bamboos. If the clumps of bamboo were declined at the site nearby the village, the Orang Asli will go deeper into the forest. Meanwhile, the factor of distance has set up two different behaviours: the consideration to enter the forest to collect bamboo and the frequency of getting into the forests. If they need to enter isolated or remote forests, the Orang Asli might consider staying in the forest. The Orang Asli will rarely spend the night in the forest, but if they do, it is because they have other purposes other than just collecting bamboo shoots alone.

The reality of exploitation

Sales of bamboo

For the purpose of sale, bamboos are transported and gathered by the Orang Asli in one place. The place was not specifically built as a building or store, but the bamboos are simply placed under the trees by the roadside to facilitate the sale, purchase and transport to be implemented. They waited for any chances of selling their products. The bamboo buyers enter the village three times a

week, depending on the weather, demand and the Orang Asli's availability.

Bamboos are sold to traders in a form of bunches of ten bamboo sticks each. Bamboo is sold at RM0.15 for each bunch which contains 10 stems of bamboo, the Orang Asli will get RM1.50. Normally, a group will be able to bring down more than twenty ties. If so, the groups will get at least RM30.00 for the sales every time they went into the forest. Payment is not made based on the knowledge and skills of the Orang Asli, but by the number of produced products instead. This indicates that any specific knowledge and skills owned by the Orang Asli are valueless, unless they are translated into the quantity of produced products.

Traders enter the Orang Asli villages using small vehicles, such as four-wheel drive or even three-ton lorry. The arrival of traders' vehicles is easily realised by the Orang Asli, as their arrivals are accompanied by the sound of horns. As the traders entered the doorsteps, their vehicles will be followed and surrounded by the Orang Asli, either to sell their products or simply as observers. The Orang Asli do not have to bring their products to traders, but the traders themselves will drive their vehicles to the places where the Orang Asli placed their goods.

Money use and debt

Although the amount of money gained by the Orang Asli is not much, the Orang Asli is highly dependent upon it. The money will be used to buy their basic needs, especially food and clothing. The purchased foods are rice, sugar and tea or coffee. There are two optional choices for the Orang Asli Kuntai to purchase their requirements, i.e. through traders who buy bamboo products, or buy the daily clothes and groceries at stores from nearest towns. Nevertheless, considering that the towns of everyday clothes and grocery stores are far away from their villages, the Orang Asli Kuntai prefer to buy basic necessities from the traders.

Money raised by the sale of bamboos is often returned to the traders for food supplies sold by them. However, the prices of goods sold by the

traders are higher than the actual prices in other markets. Sugar, for example, is sold at RM2.20 or RM2.30, while its actual price is actually only RM1.75 (when the research was conducted). Similarly with the price of rice, the actual price for rice with the same quality costs RM1.50 per kg, but was sold RM2.00 to RM2.50 to the Orang Asli. However, the Orang Asli still chooses to buy through the traders because they do not have much choice. Their only other option is by going out to Lasah or Sungai Siput town, but they have to bear the costs, such as petrol and maintenance of vehicles or motorcycles.

Since the income earned from the sale of bamboo is not much and the Orang Asli has more needs to be fulfilled, they had to use the mechanism of debt to acquire those needs. For instance, if one bunch of bamboos got sold, the Orang Asli will only get RM1.50. With that income, the Orang Asli has to buy a kilogram of sugar which costs RM2.20. Thus, they have to owe traders RM0.70 for the particular amount of sugar. The same goes also for the other items such as rice and other groceries. If a group obtained a total of RM 30.00 and being divided into two heads of the family, they will get RM15.00 each. With the money, they will buy the desired necessities. If they cannot afford to pay the amount, the generated payment from the sales in the future is lesser than the one for the traders.

Traders recorded each of the Orang Asli's debts in books. However, the Orang Asli do not have records that show the same thing. As most of the Orang Asli do not know how to read and write, they do not understand what is being recorded by the traders. Notification of the outstanding balance was informed by the traders verbally, with the nonexistence of a special transaction document. Each transaction was made based on the mutual trust between the traders and the Orang Asli, but it is not fair for the Orang Asli to not know the exact balance of their debts.

The Orang Asli has no choice, as they had to get food and credit from the existing traders. They do not have any other options of searching for another traders because typical traders have been signed for each particular area to take and buy the forestry products of the Orang Asli. The

situation has caused the Orang Asli always to be burdened with debts. Relying on that, the Orang Asli dependence on the traders is based on two aspects, selling forestry products and acquiring basic necessities. In fact, they have a bond with the allocation through debt for a certain period of time which cannot be ascertained by the Orang Asli.

Conflict of determining the price

The Orang Asli have to rely on the traders' services to market their products. Factors that might hinder them are lack of suitable vehicles and technologies that enable them to distribute products to consumers, quickly and in good condition. Findings by Mohd Nizam *et al.*, (2009) proved the same thing, especially regarding the handling, storage and transportation, as problems in the business activity and productivity of the Orang Asli. In addition, as stated by Gomes (2004), the reliance of the Orang Asli on traders is due to the lack of knowledge about the affairs of the market. As a result, the Orang Asli Kuntai had to rely almost entirely on the traders to distribute their commodity products. They never tried to transport their own products to foreign markets by using their own vehicle: the motorcycle. However, these efforts are not worth it because it took a long time, high costs and uncertain consumer acceptance of their products. Thus, in return, they had to consider using the current services. The main effect of the dependency on the current service is exploitation towards Kuntai Orang Asli that exist in many facets, including the manipulation of commodity pricing.

Bamboo products, for example, are being sold for the wholesale price of RM0.15 for the length of three-to-four metres. Stacked and bonded ten bamboo sticks of the Orang Asli's bamboo pile will only fetch RM1.50. However, the actual market price of bamboo is approximately five times higher for each bar, which is from RM 0.50 to RM 0.70. The Orang Asli Kuntai acknowledges that they are aware of being oppressed by terms of the pricing of their products, but they do not have the power to fix the prices of commodity products. Within this context, power refers to the authority to fix and maintain prices. As the result of their inabilities, they have to accept all the

reasons given by the traders, such as low market prices, increasing of diesel and labour costs, and the decreasing demand for commodity products. Although the Orang Asli know that the fixed price by award is low and disagree with it, the Orang Asli have to sell their commodity products in order to raise money to cover their living costs and needs.

Strategies against exploitation

The Orang Asli Kuntai realise that they are being exploited by the traders and this reality raises the awareness of discontent and silence conflict of the Orang Asli Kuntai towards the traders. Although the Orang Asli Kuntai are dissatisfied of exploitation made by the traders, they do not have the option to show any behaviour of opposing. This is because the Orang Asli Kuntai faces the dilemma of dissatisfactions and wants to have replacement products. Nevertheless, the Orang Asli Kuntai still takes other actions to show their discontent: by doing a silent opposition.

This action is similar to what has been described by Scott (1985). Scott describes the resistance by farmers when they oppressed particular groups and they would take action through protests and sabotage. However, in the context of the Orang Asli Kuntai, no aggressive action was taken. Instead, they choose to show the behaviour as if they are weak, then they will be able to gain sympathy and trust from the traders. As stated below, there are ways and strategies to overcome the actions of the Orang Asli exploitation.

Delaying

The delayed action is being divided into two forms, i.e. time delaying and delaying to provide forestry resources. This behaviour of delaying can be seen through selling bamboo products. As the life expectancy of bamboo is able to last for quite some time, the Orang Asli uses it as a way to demand and frustrate the traders. For example, as being mutually promised between the Orang Asli and traders, traders will be entering their doorsteps every Monday (for example) and will be entering the village on another day (for example Thursday). Once they entered the village, traders

will not be provided with the bamboo products. With a variety of reasons including the weather does not oblige, the product keeps on decreasing. Alternatively, the Orang Asli asks the traders to come again on the following day. Nevertheless, such actions are not being consistently performed; only at certain times. Mostly, it will be done when the supply of bamboo is not much although the demand is constantly in the market. Normally it is done during the rainy season or when bamboo supply is decreasing. Truth is, despite the rainy season, the Orang Asli are still able to obtain bamboos. This is because they have specific knowledge and skills to deal with such weather conditions and they have enough required time to obtain sufficient bamboos. The move was simply being performed because they want to prove their available power. However, it only happens in terms of supplying products and is not associated with the power to control the price of those products.

The act of delaying the product's supplies has become an alternative for the Orang Asli to show their reactions toward the exploitation. This act is directly in contact with the act of delaying time. However, the only difference is that the Orang Asli only delays in terms of the desired quality or characteristics of the award. For example, the desired length of bamboo by traders is four metres in size, but the Orang Asli chooses to supply bamboos with the size of three metres. Although these do not benefit the Orang Asli at all, they still keep on protesting through the acts of sabotage.

Product reducing

There are two concepts of product reduction: reducing the supply of products and reducing the quantity of the product. The Orang Asli reduces supplies lesser than what has been demanded by traders. This action was made with the intention to stress out the allocation and to increase their product prices. However, the outcome of the action is not always desirable. It is influenced by two factors: traders' supplied parts and the agreement among the Orang Asli. The main challenge faced by the Orang Asli is the fact that those products are also being offered by the Orang Asli in a different village. Price differences

do exist between the Orang Asli from different villages. For example, a piece of bamboo with a measurement of three to four meters is sold at RM0.15 in Kuntai, while the similar bamboo is sold with the price of RM0.12 among the Orang Asli Toh (in Kuala Mu post). There are several factors that caused the price difference, such as the agreement between the members of the community in offering its products and different traders who are involved.

The location of the Orang Asli Toh's village is much different from the village of Kuntai Orang Asli, as it is surrounded by another four villages which are very close to each other. Thus, the occurrence of offering competitive product might affect the labour (The Orang Asli) towards the public and the dependency on similar products. The situation has reduced the agreement among the Orang Asli in the village. In contrast to the Orang Asli Kuntai, other adjacent villages are not as close to Toh. Thus, it allows them to control the supply of forestry products to the traders. With respect to traders, the amount of products taken by the traders differs within the two villages due to the price difference which is offered by the traders.

Compliance and pseudo solidarity

The community of the Orang Asli is known as the community who does not favour violence. They can be easily approached. The Orang Asli are friendly related to the traders and capable to laugh along with them, while at the same time keeping their dissatisfaction towards the traders. In the conversations with the traders, they even often agree with the words and stated that they are willing to abide the trader's request. But the reality is otherwise they show false adherence towards the traders just solely to please and persuade the traders so that they are able to add value for their products from the relationship.

This particular added value includes the opportunity to raise prices, to reduce the prices of purchase goods through the traders and to get some free items. Through the relationship with the traders, the Orang Asli wants to influence the traders (though unnoticed by the Orang Asli) in order to increase product prices. If the

improvement is not much at all, the Orang Asli still hope that they will charge more than the fees should be. The Orang Asli also wants the price of each purchased item through the traders to include the basic needs for the deduction of certain amounts. Furthermore, the Orang Asli can obtain free items such as cigarettes if they have a close relationship with the traders. Nevertheless, the Orang Asli remains comfortable with their repressive actions towards middlemen who control the price of their products. However, they always look capable of action even though they seem to indicate that they are obedient and have a sense of fellowship with the traders.

Conclusion

Efforts and goals to enter the mainstream of society (inclusion) with the nation of the Orang Asli are a noble thing. However, despite these efforts, entering into the world of the Orang Asli has given disadvantages with their system. The new system has resulted that the Orang Asli have to rely on money to acquire and meet the needs and conveniences in their daily lives. This reality opens up their knowledge and skills and is soon exploited by many parties, especially the traders. This problem was recognised by the Orang Asli Kuntai, but they did not have any option to simply take aggressive action because they have afforded to become the major players in the participated system. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the Orang Asli have no actions at all in order to protest against the unfair situation. In a way, the Orang Asli have responded to the circumstances with an ability of a win win situation between the Orang Asli and traders.

It can be summarised that the Orang Asli Kuntai and the Orang Asli in different places dare to act against oppression (it is violence-based). They are no longer becoming the "rubber stamps" towards those who oppress them. The courage to fight against the unfair outer context is growing. Secondly, the Orang Asli have shown the elements of unity while facing problems and resistances from the outside. This unity is being illustrated by their efforts in being mutually agreed while responding to the middlemen. The opposition's efforts will not succeed if it is

done by only singular parties. It was partially successful as they are united in the fight. Thirdly, there are existences of awareness and sensitivities among the Orang Asli about their own kind who were oppressed by outsiders. The awareness of this possibility exists as a result of knowledge and exposure to information that comes from the outside community. The trigger of this particular reaction might not be happening if not for being perfectly aware of it. This reflects that the Orang Asli values freedom and equality. Fourthly, the Orang Asli are wise in counterinsurgency strategy as a response to the other elements which keep on trying to take advantage of them. They set out strategies within this study which were compiled through an agreement among them. In fact, from this study, it can be concluded that The Orang Asli do have assets that can be shared by the other communities in the country.

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