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People's Choice of Place of Living and Related Factors in a Coastal Community in Riau, Indonesia

Suzuki Haruka*

This article analyzes how Melayu people choose their place of living in a coastal community in Riau, focusing on people who do not own land. Based on field research conducted in A Community, I discuss the following: (1) characteristics of the community, (2) people's choices of place of living, and (3) people's migration to upstream areas of the community. The relevant characteristics of A Community are that it is a fishing community—it was formed in brackish water areas around the coast—and not very dependent on land. Family dwellings and family ties are the most fundamental determinants of people's choice to live here. People's livelihoods rely on a combination of various sources of income, and employment and schooling are often outside the community. Plantation companies starting their business in the upstream areas in the late 1990s brought employment to the people but reduced fish stocks and deposited so much waste into the river that dwellings built on the water could no longer be repaired. These changes led people to migrate to upstream areas of the community. Over time, upstream migration may lead to deep cultural changes that transform this and other coastal communities such that they come to resemble their terrestrial counterparts.

Keywords: coastal area, community, place of residence, livelihood, Melayu, Indonesia

Introduction

This article analyzes how Melayu people choose their place of living at the family level in a coastal community in Riau Province, Indonesia. The answer to the question of why people live in Riau, on the island of Sumatra, is very likely closely related to the area's population dynamics. Despite the reasons being largely socioeconomic, this paper focuses on family-level factors. The family is a major component of most people's lives, and how people decide where to live is related to the way they consider living as a family. In anthropology, a group of people living in one dwelling is considered a family, and kinship is discussed in terms of dwellings (Lévi-Strauss 1988; Waterson 1990). Thus,

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the examination in this study of how people decide where to live will unfold using the dwelling as the unit of analysis.

Studies on Melayu people on the east coast of Sumatra have examined the following topics: geography and the livelihood-based classification of villages in lowland peatland areas (Momose 2002, 87–108); peatland development history (Abe 1993, 191–205; Masuda, Mizuno, and Sugihara 2016, 148–184); population dynamics and land use in peatlands (Masuda, Retno, and Mizuno 2016, 185–210); and household-level livelihood analysis in peatlands (Mizuno and Masuda 2016, 312–352). These studies have investigated people's livelihoods in relation to the land. In contrast, this article focuses on people who do not own land and examines their livelihoods in relation to rivers and seas—topics that remain underexplored in the literature.

Literature Review and Research Objective

This section provides a detailed discussion of Mizuno and Masuda's (2016, 312–352) study, which involved a household-level livelihood analysis close to that conducted in the current research. Mizuno and Masuda analyzed the complex livelihood strategies of Melayu people in the peatlands. The study targeted the Bhakti sub-village—where people settled in the 1940s—in TL Village, which is located to the west of the community covered by the current article. People living in the sub-village were not exclusively of Melayu origin and instead had engaged in intermarriage with other ethnic groups, such as Javanese (Mizuno and Masuda 2016, 319). This mixing was due to many migrants coming to the sub-village from the 1990s as it developed and the sub-village following a philosophy of not rejecting newcomers or people from other ethnic groups (Mizuno and Masuda 2016, 320–321). The main livelihoods of people in the sub-village were oil palm and rubber cultivation, though peatlands do not provide productive soils for these crops and frequent fires in the sub-village further reduced productivity. Despite these adverse conditions, people continued living in the region as they had other occupations that did not involve land cultivation, such as fishing, commerce, and public service work. The income from these non-agricultural activities accounted for up to 41.9 percent of total household income, almost equaling the income from agriculture (Mizuno and Masuda 2016, 350–351). This diversification of economic activity enabled people to stabilize their livelihoods in the peatlands, which by nature are not suited for agriculture and tend to offer insecure livelihood prospects.

Mizuno and Masuda (2016, 337–339) also showed that while people living in the sub-village were unlikely to give up their peatlands despite the low land productivity,

many had abandoned cultivating the land because of the constant fires. Furthermore, because many people living in the sub-village had migrated to the community to acquire the land (i.e., peatland) in order to stabilize their livelihoods, they believed that the land formed the foundation of their livelihood.

Despite the various contributions of the aforementioned study, at this point a question can be asked: What about the landless Melayu people living on the east coast of Sumatra? Why and how do they live there? Prior studies have not adequately covered this topic. Thus, this study describes the characteristics of the landless Melayu community living on the east coast of Sumatra, describes how they live there while focusing on their families, and considers the context of the area's development and dynamic population movements.

Research Site and Methods

The eastern coast of Sumatra borders the Strait of Malacca and has long been a trading area between inland Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. A Community, which is studied in this article, served as a transit point for trade between Bengkalis Island, the major trading area, and the main island of Sumatra (Barnard 1998, 87–96). Rivers were used for trade in the area as they connected the interior regions to the sea. From the 1870s, rubber plantations, timber harvesting, oil fields, and oil palm and acacia plantations developed in these interior regions, which in turn led to the development of overland routes that changed the main means of transportation (Masuda, Mizuno, and Sugihara 2016, 148–184). Because of this transportational shift, coastal villages situated at the mouths of rivers became less connected to the interior regions and lagged in terms of infrastructure and other development.

A Village is an old village located at the mouth of a river that flows into the east coast of Sumatra (Fig. 1). The settlement surveyed by Mizuno and Masuda (2016) is located to the west of A Village. Mangrove forests spread around and behind the village, and coconut and rubber gardens were found farther inland. These landscapes are similar to those identified in another prior study (Takaya and Poniman 1986, 264). The area around A Village was a trading post in the Strait of Malacca from the fourteenth century and served as a fortress of the Siak Kingdom (Barnard 1998, 87–96). There are three communities or sub-villages in A Village, and this article is focused on A Community, located on the most seaward part of the village. It comprises mostly pile dwellings, with timber pile structures lifting the entire dwellings from the river bottom to the water surface. At the time of the study, the population of A Village was 1,179 across 319 households, and almost

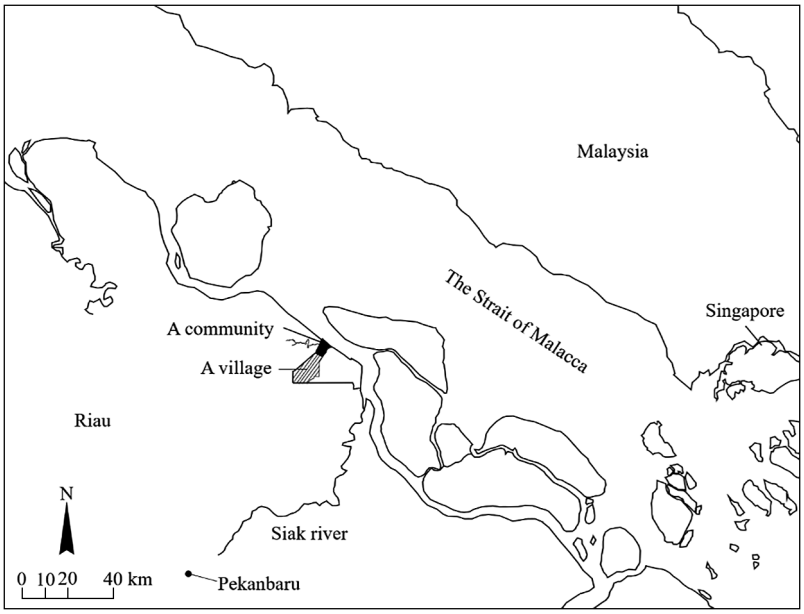

Fig. 1 Map of Research Site
Source: Prepared by Haruka Suzuki based on Badan Informasi Geospasial (2019) and the administrative map (Kabupaten Bengkalis, unpublished).

all households (as defined by the village office) were of Melayu origin (Suzuki 2019, 62–63).

Approximately one hundred households lived in their own dwellings, and fifty dwellings had more than one household living in them (Suzuki 2019, 62–63). Villagers informed the village office when they moved into or out of the village and when there were births or deaths. The village office used this information to keep track of the number of households and the population in the village, although household registration was done according to the villagers' will. There were sometimes two or even three households living together in one dwelling, as will be described later. As mentioned above, a group of people living in one dwelling is considered a family, and kinship has been discussed in terms of the dwelling situation. This perspective of the dwelling unit is used in this study when describing the characteristics of the residents of A Community.

Following the method used by Suzuki (2019, 56–82), the livelihoods of dwellings in A Community will now be described. Of the 45 dwellings surveyed, about 35 percent were associated with inland plantation companies that transported goods by boat; about 35 percent were engaged in retail, carpentry, or civil service; and about 30 percent were engaged in fishing. The average monthly income was approximately IDR 3,730,000. In

29 of the dwellings (approximately 64 percent), women earned additional income from making sago crackers using sago palm starch and small fish and from weaving traditional clothes. Their average monthly income was approximately IDR 615,000, which accounted for approximately 18 percent of the total dwelling income—though there was great variation in income because their products were made to order. In an attempt to stabilize incomes by increasing orders, the enterprise Badan Usaha Miliki Desa was organized in A Village in 2017. In two dwellings, people engaged in agriculture. Most people in A Community did not own land.

Some people received money from their children and relatives living outside the village, while others used their savings from timber harvesting activities they had earlier engaged in. Timber harvesting was a popular occupation in the 1990s and 2000s in coastal areas, including A Village. The A Village government classified about 45 percent of households as poor, supported them with rationed rice, and exempted them from medical expenses. The village government also supported single-parent households that had children of high school age or younger by providing them with daily necessities several times a year. Furthermore, plantation companies located inland provided school fees for the children of some households.

The main research method in this study was interviews with local people. Surveys were conducted in March 2018 and August 2018 targeting 45 randomly selected dwellings, and interviews were conducted on residents. The heads of the 45 surveyed dwellings ranged in age from their forties to seventies, with an average age of 59 years.

People's Choice of Where to Live

Composition of Residents[1)]

As shown in Table 1, the composition of residents was varied in the surveyed dwellings. There were nuclear families, extended families, and others, with the most common type being nuclear families made up of married couples and their children living in a dwelling. Nuclear families accounted for 35 of the 45 dwellings surveyed. In most cases, couples cared for more than one child, and the average number of residents in a dwelling was five. There were also two cases of mother–children residents and three of father–children residents. Most single-mother or single-father families were due to widowhood, but there were also cases of divorce; and the average number of residents in these dwellings was three.

1) This section is based on Suzuki (2019, 56–82).

Table 1 Composition of Residents in the Researched Dwellings

	Composition of Residents	Number of Dwellings (N = 45)	Average Number of Residents
Nuclear family	Married couple and their children	30	5
	Mother and her children	2	3
	Father and his children	3	3
Extended family	Married couple and their children + mother's parents	3	5
	Married couple and their children + father's parents	4	6
	Married couple and their children + mother's relatives	2	7
	Married couple and their children + father's relatives	0	0
Others	Siblings	1	2

Source: Field survey data, 2018

In the case of extended families, there were some where at least one parent lived with a couple and their children (these were families with parents of the wife and/or husband) and some in which a relative (only maternal relatives; there were no families with paternal relatives) lived with a couple and their children. In all cases where the couple and their children lived with the couple's parents, the children of the couple started living with the parents of the couple after marriage. Since there were cases of maternal as well as paternal parents of the couple living in the dwelling, it can be assumed that the choice of arrangement was flexible and disregarded maternal vs. paternal lineage. Finally, the "other" category included a case in which there were two siblings living together. In this dwelling, the father had died in 2000 and the mother shortly before 2018 (the year of the survey), leaving the children on their own.

In addition to the above categories, there were multiple households living together in six of the 45 dwellings surveyed. Households here refer to households identified by the village office, which are determined based on the residents' registration application. For example, in dwellings where couples lived with their parents as well as their children, there were sometimes two households living together, while in other cases there was only one household. Some single people registered their households independent of their parents so they could receive material support from the village government for low-income households. This study could not thoroughly analyze people's detailed livelihood strategies, which hinders potential discussions about the significance of household division in people's livelihood strategy choices. However, the reasoning mentioned above for changing household registration suggests that people made a liv-

ing by combining their livelihood income with the financial support they received by registering their household at the village office.

Ownership of Dwelling and Years of Residence

This subsection delves into dwelling ownership and place of residence. Tables 2 and 3 show dwelling ownership, years of residence (i.e., the number of years that the resident who has lived in a dwelling the longest has lived there), and the age of the dwelling for each category of resident composition. For years of residence, the tables show that dwellings were inherited from both the wife's and the husband's sides of the family. In some cases, family members on the wife's side lived in a residence inherited from the husband's side of the family. This indicates that residence choices were relatively flexible, without grand ties to kinship. For example, in dwelling number 7 (Table 3) the couple, their children, and the wife's parents lived together in a residence inherited from the husband's parents, who had passed away. This study could not clarify what type of inheritance took place prior to the current generation of couples (e.g., whether the inheritance on the wife's side was a continuation from the previous generation). Future research may further clarify this point and show how kinship is associated with people's choice of where to live in the region.

In the case of nuclear families, 24 of the dwellings were occupied by married couples who had built their own dwellings, and all 24 had at least one member of the couple from the village. After marriage, some couples lived together in their parents' house for several years and then built their own. In other cases, the couple began building a house immediately after marriage and left their parents' residence. For example, in dwelling number 1 (Table 2) both members of the couple were from the village, and the couple lived in the residence of the wife's parents for 25 years after marriage. In 2007 they built a new house and moved out. In dwelling number 9 (Table 2), the couple built a new house and moved into it immediately after marriage.

With respect to dwelling inheritance, there were eight cases each where couples inherited the dwelling from the wife's and the husband's parents. In these cases, the couple lived with the parents in the latter's dwelling after marriage and inherited the dwelling when the parents passed. For example, in dwelling number 31 (Table 2), in 1990 the couple inherited a dwelling built by the husband's parents more than eighty years ago. In dwelling number 32 (Table 2), the couple lived with the wife's parents outside or within the community prior to inheriting their current dwelling from the husband's parents. A comparison of years of residence and age of inherited dwellings shows a large gap in all cases: the age of the building was longer than the years of residence (Tables 2 and 3). This implies that the dwellings were passed down from one generation

Table 2 Ownership of Dwelling and Years of Residence in Nuclear Families

Dwelling No.	Ownership of Dwelling	Years of Residence	Age of Dwelling (Years)	Main Income Sources
1	The couple built it.	10	10	Rubber garden management, nurse
2		12	12	Day labor in plantation company, weaving
3		12	12	Transporting goods by ship
4		12	12	Day labor in plantation company
5		13	13	Village office staff, fishing, swiftlet farming
6		14	14	Fishing, carpentry, weaving
7		15	15	Transporting goods by ship, kindergarten teacher
8		18	18	Carpentry, sago cracker production, weaving
9		20	20	Sago cracker production, employment in plantation company
10		23	23	Employment in plantation company
11		23	23	Day labor in plantation company
12		25	25	Sago cracker production, day labor in plantation company
13		26	26	Weaving, tailoring
14		27	27	Fishing, sago cracker production
15		28	28	Carpentry, weaving
16		30	30	Day labor in plantation company
17		38	38	Village office staff, weaving
18		6	6	Fishing, sago cracker production
19		6	6	Day labor in plantation company, weaving
20		8	8	Retail store management, weaving
21		9	9	Carpentry, weaving
22		Approx. 50	Approx. 50	Day labor in plantation company, sago cracker production
23		More than 30	More than 30	Carpentry, transporting goods by ship
24		More than 38	More than 38	Transporting goods by ship, elementary school teacher
25	The couple inherited it from the wife's parents.	17	34	Retail store management, sago cracker production
26		18	Unknown	Retail store management, weaving
27		20	More than100	Fishing, sago cracker production
28		46	More than 100	Carpentry, weaving
29	The couple inherited it from the husband's parents.	10	29	Village office staff, weaving
30		10	30	Fishing
31		28	More than 80	Transporting goods by ship, weaving
32		35	More than 70	Transporting goods by ship
33	The father bought it from his sibling.	29	42	Kindergarten teacher, weaving, sago cracker production
34	The mother bought it from her sibling.	50	Unknown	Fishing, sago cracker production
35	The couple bought it from another villager.	5	More than 50	Fishing

Source: Results of interview survey, 2018

Table 3 Ownership of Dwelling and Years of Residence in Extended and Other Family Types

Dwelling No.	Composition of Residents	Ownership of Dwelling	Years of Residence	Age of Dwelling (Years)	Main Income Sources
1	Extended family	The couple built it.	18	18	Retail store management, employment in plantation company
2			Unknown	Unknown	Transporting goods by ship, junior school teacher, weaving
3		They inherited it from the wife's parents.	58	Unknown	Painting business (outside the village)
4		They inherited it from the husband's parents.	74	More than 100	Day labor in plantation company, sago cracker production
5			13	27	Employment in plantation company, sago cracker production
6			24	24	Transporting goods by ship, coconut garden management
7			8	Unknown	Employment in oil company (outside the village), transporting goods by ship, sago cracker production, kindergarten teacher
8		Mother's parents bought it from their sibling.	More than 50	More than 50	Sago cracker production
9		Father's parents bought it from their sibling.	53	53	Employment in plantation company
10	Others	Their parents built it.	17	17	Carpentry, weaving

Source: Results of interview survey, 2018

to the next. For example, in the cases of dwellings number 27 and 28 (Table 2), the families had been living there for more than a hundred years and the residents did not have much knowledge about who had built them. However, based on the ages of the buildings, it was inferred that the couple's grandparents or great-grandparents had built them; in these cases, the location of the inherited dwelling may have served as the reason for the family's choice of where to live.

In a few cases, the dwellings were purchased from siblings or village residents. In one case in which the couple purchased a dwelling from a sibling, the purchase involved a form of support for the sibling, who was in economic difficulty; with the money from the sale, the sibling moved out of the community to seek job opportunities. This suggests that sometimes families purchase dwellings not only to have a place to live but also to support other family members.

Finally, dwelling number 35 (Table 2) included a couple where both husband and wife were from outside the community. This dwelling had seemingly been home to several people who had moved into the community from outside, but many of the past owners had left within a few years because they did not fit into the somewhat closed atmosphere of A Community. In this case, the outsider couple had been living in the community for five years, having arrived in order to seek jobs, and they had bought the dwelling from people in the community.

Living Places and Main Sources of Income

In a few cases, the main source of income for a household was land-based work, such as rubber and coconut garden management.[2] In other cases, the income came from river- and sea-related jobs, civil service, retail work, carpentry, sago cracker production, and textiles. Those who worked on land near the community owned the land and cultivated farms there. Nonetheless, many in the community did not own land and often chose to work jobs unrelated to the land, which may have been the reason for their choice to live on the coast.

In fact, boat ownership was seemingly very relevant for the choice of place to live and source of income. People who owned boats had jobs related to transporting goods by boat or to fishing, or were employed in a local business.[3] Among the 45 dwellings surveyed, 26 owned boats. Boat capacity varied considerably, with the smallest weighing

2) The people who cultivated rubber and coconut palms owned the land closest to the coast. This land was covered with sago palm forests until the early 1980s, and sago starch was the staple food of these people. At that time, more people owned land than now. Coconut and rubber cultivation began later, and during the boom in coconut palm production many people sold their land to people living inland.

3) People fishing for their own consumption also owned boats.

about one ton and being used mostly for fishing and transporting daily necessities, and the largest weighing about twenty tons and being used as tugboats to transport acacia logs from the river to the sea for plantation companies. Acacia logs were loaded into large containers owned by the company operating a plantation upstream of the river, and the tugboats that pulled the logs were owned by people in the community. Therefore, in A Community, owning a boat could provide a wider range of options for income sources.

Employment in plantation companies[4] was another prominent source of income. In the late 1990s, plantation companies started operating in the upper reaches of the community. These companies have been conducting various corporate social responsibility activities ever since, such as providing financial support to surrounding villages for infrastructure development. One of these activities involved employing people in the area, which led to people from A Community getting jobs to transport acacia logs from the river to the sea by boat.

As mentioned earlier, for some women weaving and sago cracker production were important sources of income. The weavers worked mostly on looms that they set up in their own dwellings, and they chose weaving as an income source mostly because they owned a loom and their families had been weaving for generations—the family's skill in this craft had been passed on to them. Meanwhile, sago cracker production was a relatively easy task for anyone who knew how to make the crackers and had access to the ingredients. In fact, the author had a go at making sago crackers under the supervision of a local; even though it was the author's first attempt, the resulting product was good enough to be sold. Sago crackers can be produced anywhere that the ingredients are available, and thus this source of income did not influence people's choice of place of residence.

Living Outside the Community

The results of the survey on people's migration in A Community are presented in Table 4. Among the 156 people from the 45 surveyed dwellings, 53 people from 17 dwellings had family members who had experienced migration, including children. Table 4 shows the reasons for the migration of these 53 respondents, which may be categorized into four main groups: education, employment, marriage, and other.

In the case of education, many people migrated to attend high school or university,

4) Some people were employed by plantation companies, while others were just day laborers. This difference depended on the political position of people in the village; employment in plantation companies was decided purposefully by a few people in the community. These few people prioritized their families and relatives for employment, and when there was a shortage of workers other people were hired on a daily basis.

Table 4 Reasons for People's Residence Outside the Community

Reason	Place of Residence	Period	Situation after Migration	Persons (n = 53)
Education	Provincial capital, regency capital	2 years～	They returned to the village after graduation or dropping out.	6
			They did not return to the village because they got a job in the new place.	11
Work	Regency capital, around village, coastal area in other regency, Malaysia	1 year～	They returned to the village.	13
			They did not return to the village.	3
Marriage	Around village, inland in same regency, coastal area in other regency	2 years～	They returned to the village.	6
			They did not return to the village.	9
Others	Regency capital, around village, Malaysia	2 years～	They returned to the village.	3
			They did not return to the village.	2

Source: Results of interview survey, 2018

as there were no high schools or universities in the surrounding villages. Thus, children had to leave the village to live in the prefectural or provincial capital for their secondary and tertiary education, and the minimum period of migration for education purposes was two years. There were a few cases of children discontinuing their education and returning to their villages without graduating due to economic reasons, and most who went on to university came back to the village after graduation. There was one case in which a child graduated and got a job and married in the state capital.

With respect to employment, the main reasons for migration were to seek fishing places outside the village and get work there (e.g., transporting goods by boat). In some cases, people migrated to live with relatives outside the village, while in others they migrated to find jobs such as in boat transportation or in the construction industry. In both cases, people decided to migrate based on personal relationships with their relatives and job opportunities. As most people relied on fishing for a livelihood, they rarely sought out agricultural land in the areas they migrated to. In fact, the main migration destinations were prefectural capitals and their surrounding regions, coastal areas in other prefectures, and Malaysia. Some people had relatives who had already migrated to Malaysia, while others had jobs that involved transporting goods to Malaysia. Jobs related to boat-based transportation were particularly popular during the commercial logging boom period of the late 1990s and early 2000s, and they were mostly done by relatively young men in the village. After the boom, 13 of the 16 people from A Community working these jobs returned to the village: some returned because they had lost their jobs, while others married and returned with their families. Among those who did not

return after the boom, some were engaged in fishing and continued to send money to their families in the village.

In cases of outmigration due to marriage, sometimes the married couple lived in the partner's hometown after marriage and then returned to the village, while in other cases the couple did not return. This difference was thought to be related to the couple's livelihood and the availability of housing in the village. One of the reasons for intermarriage with people outside the village was related to the abovementioned commercial logging boom period, during which logging vessels frequently entered and left the village carrying timber harvested upstream. Many people working on these vessels rested or got food in the village, which led to relationships being developed with people in the village.

Other reasons for leaving the village included people wanting to see the world outside or to escape interpersonal relationships in the village. Most migrants with such motivations were young men who moved to the prefectural capital, neighboring villages, or Malaysia by seeking help from acquaintances and others. Some returned to the village after a while, but this study could not find information on those who remained outside. There were also some cases in which children from the village were adopted by relatives from outside and did not return to A Community. All the people from the village who had been adopted at an early age said that they would like to return to the village if they could, but there was no place for them to return to because their parents and relatives had passed away.

Building New Dwellings in Upstream Areas

Tables 2 and 3 show that 26 of the 45 dwellings were newly built, 12 of them upstream of the community (dwellings number 1 to 10 and 12 in Table 2 and dwelling number 1 in Table 3). Based on the age of these dwellings, it could be inferred that upstream movement had occurred for the last 25 years and was ongoing at the time of the 2018 survey.

Before understanding why people built new dwellings in upstream areas, it is necessary to summarize the details of coastal settlement ownership in the region. Under the national law, the coast is defined as the area extending seaward for 12 miles (approximately 19 kilometers) from the coast; the sea areas are what connect islands, mouths of rivers, bays, shoals, brackish wetland, and lagoons (Perpem no. 17, 2016); and the seacoast refers to the areas where the tide rises and falls (i.e., at least 100 meters from the high tide line on the landward side; Perpem no. 17, 2016). The coast and seacoast are not classified as land (Perpem no. 17, 2016) and are owned by the state. However, in a few exceptional cases, people are granted rights to manage and own coastal or seacoast lands—for example, under customary law or by virtue of having lived in the place for generations (Perpem no. 17, 2016). A Community is one of these exceptional cases.

One question emerges at this point: at the community level, how did people recognize their place of living in the coastal area? People perceived the tidal range to be approximately 1.5 kilometers inland from the mouth of the river, which was roughly the area of the community. There were no certificates of landownership issued by the village government in A Community. However, villagers knew details about local families' living places, such as where the families lived and how long they had lived there. Meanwhile, the land in the upstream areas of the community was untouched at the time of survey, and it was not customary for people to own it. All the people in the community had the right to build new dwellings in these upstream areas on a first come, first served basis. Therefore, landownership was not a constraint for people to build new dwellings in the upstream areas.

The data in Tables 2 and 3 show no significant differences in sources of income between those who migrated upstream and those who lived at the seaside. Those who owned newly built dwellings upstream still worked mostly in river- or sea-related jobs such as fishing, boat transportation, and employment in plantation companies. Dwelling number 1 (Table 2) had rubber plantation as a source of income, but this was an isolated case—not enough to suggest the possibility of a shift toward land-based sources of income. In terms of changes in income sources in the last 25 years (i.e., the period during which many new dwellings were built upstream), there was the commercial logging boom in the 1990s and 2000s, the establishment of plantation companies upstream, and A Community members becoming engaged in transporting timber on the river. The income from these jobs, combined with other income sources, probably stabilized the incomes of families in A Community. This may have encouraged people to build new dwellings since they were secure about their income and could allocate funds to build their dwellings.

Among those who migrated upstream, particularly those whose income came from employment in plantation companies, their lifestyle may have changed from the traditional coastal lifestyle. Plantation company employment is very different from traditional coastal sources of livelihood, which are based mostly on the river and sea resources (e.g., fishing). Company employment can also provide a stable source of income that allows people to maintain their traditional way of life to some extent.

Let us now consider why people built new dwellings upstream in terms of the coastal environment and architecture. Some people who built new dwellings upstream thought that dwellings near the mouth of the river were vulnerable to the potentially damaging effects of sea breezes and waves. To counter these effects and strengthen their dwellings against these natural conditions, people living at the seaside took measures such as adding timber piles for reinforcement (Suzuki 2019). In addition, some people who built

new dwellings were dissatisfied with the inadequate infrastructure on the northern bank of the community; specifically, there were only a few dwellings on the northern bank, no electricity, and no overland route, and people had to cross to the south bank by boat to obtain their daily requirements. In A Community, these problems were frequently discussed and infrastructure development was planned, but measures had yet to be taken. The main reason for the delay was the small number of residents relative to the cost of infrastructure development.

Other residents were concerned about flooding above floor level during heavy rainfall, which occurred several times a year. One such occurrence was in August 2018, while the author was conducting research in the community. At that time, there was flooding in around thirty dwellings near the mouth of the river. Although the water receded after about two days, there was extensive damage, such as goods and chattels being rendered unusable. In recent years, flooding above floor level has occurred also during high tide, mostly because of acacia wood being transported several times daily along the river; each time the vessels pass by, large waves crash against the dwellings.

Over time, dwellings on the northern bank of the river have become difficult to repair or rebuild. Most of these dwellings are wooden and require maintenance, such as adding timber piles under the floor every five to ten years (Suzuki 2019, 66). However, since the timber piles are inserted about one meter into the riverbed, it is not possible to replace them once constructed. Therefore, maintenance involves adding a new pile next to an old, decaying one. A carpenter in the community pointed out, "It is not possible to add piles in the dwellings on the northern bank because of the thick build-up of acacia bark and other materials under the floor."[5] As already mentioned, plantation companies developed acacia plantations upstream of the settlement in the late 1990s. Cut acacia is transported from the plantations to the lumberyard in the river, and when the lumberyard becomes full, acacia wood is transported to the sea via the river. The gates of the lumberyard are opened during transportation, and it is believed that this allows large quantities of acacia bark accumulated in the lumberyard to flow out and into the river and then be deposited at the mouth of the river. Indeed, on the northern bank of the community acacia bark sediment was found to be more than one meter deep in some places, and the piles of dwellings were buried under this sediment. Maintenance of these piles is nearly impossible, and these dwellings are likely to eventually topple over and collapse. Thus, from an architectural point of view, building a new dwelling at the seaside involves high risk; and people are concerned over this.

5) Interview with Mr. O, August 2, 2018.

Discussion and Conclusion

Momose (2002, 88–91) classified villages in lowland wetlands into four types according to their geographic distribution and livelihood base. Based on this classification, A Community can be categorized as a fishing village type, as it is formed in brackish water areas around the coast. Although there were relatively few people whose main source of income was fishing in A Community, many people's sources of income were based on the river and the sea. While there are reported cases of fishing village-type settlements combining rice and rubber cultivation on land (Takaya and Poniman 1986, 263–288), these types of cultivation were rarely found in A Community. Therefore, A Community can be considered to be a fishing village-type settlement characterized by an extremely low dependence on land.

Mizuno and Masuda (2016, 312–354) described Melayu villages as being open and accepting of outsiders. Meanwhile, A Community was considered to have a somewhat closed character, though temporary migratory and displacement activities were observed at the individual level. There were few migrants with family ties to the community, which represents a significant departure from the prior evidence on related communities. Thus, people in this Melayu village seemed to consider family ties and dwellings as fundamental factors behind their decision of where to live.

Landlessness was one of the factors contributing to the closed character of A Community. Only two of the 45 dwellings surveyed had land-based sources of income, while all other dwellings had sources of income that were related to the river or sea; related to the basic food, clothing, shelter, and public services of the community; or women oriented (e.g., weaving and sago cracker production). In other words, not having land in this community meant not having—or perhaps not being able to have—a land-based way of life. Thus, in A Community there were several sources of income that did not depend on land, and people often combined these sources of income—as found in previous studies (Mizuno and Masuda 2016, 350–351). Various land-based sources of income supported lives in the coastal community, though it would be a stretch to say that these sources of income were stable. Although the plantation companies in the region provided some families with a relatively stable source of income, other families still faced economic difficulties; the village government considered 45 percent of households in the community to be poor. And while the plantation companies created jobs, their entry into the region had led to a reduction in the amount of fish and to the deposition of waste in the river to such an extent that some dwellings on the river were beyond repair. Thus, the existence of these companies caused some people to change their jobs and move out. This phenomenon was one of the changes that occurred at the community level due to

statewide developments, industrial plantation development among them.

People in A Community continued to live on the coast but devised alternative means for sustaining their livelihoods. One example was employment and schooling outside the community. People in the community chose to find other sources of income that could provide better stability for their families and education for their children. Migration for educational purposes is expected to continue, as there are limited educational opportunities within A Community. Fishing is no longer a full-time occupation for most people as fish catches have declined. It is expected that in the near future public employment, jobs in acacia plantation companies, and self-employment (e.g., retail store management and weaving) will become major sources of income in the community. Potential alternatives include the creation of new employment opportunities based on people migrating, learning new skills outside the community, and bringing them back to the community.

In A Community, family members were found to have various means of financial support, including pensions and income from older adults, remittances from family members living outside the community, and employment by children; these results resonate with prior findings (Kasai 1988; Schröder-Butterfill 2004). Moreover, people bought and sold dwellings in A Community not only as a choice of where to live but also to support family members facing economic hardships.

Some people were building or had built new dwellings upstream of A Community. The reasons behind this move included a source of income, the coastal environment, and quality of buildings. People in the community were likely to have thought about ways to strike a balance with respect to these factors and attempted to make the best decisions for their families. One of the reasons people moved upstream was because of the strong and frequent waves downstream; people felt that the main reason for the large waves lapping the coast of the downstream community was boat traffic from the plantation companies. A Community and the company have a good relationship, but A Community needs to actively negotiate to reduce negative impacts from the company, such as the wave issue. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to present scientific evidence and engage in dialogue. A study on coastal erosion on the island of Bengkalis showed serious degradation, with erosion progressing 32.75 meters per year (Sutikno *et al.* 2017). However, the research site in Bengkalis is peatland and may be more prone to erosion than the main area of A Community, which is not peatland. In general, the movement of people from A Community to the upstream area showcases the potential of the transformation of coastal communities into upland ones. This change in place of residence does not simply mean changing where people live, but changing how they live, and may thus result in a major, irreversible cultural transformation.

Finally, the limitations of this study should be discussed. The study focused on

analyzing one community and was not able to make comparisons with other communities. This research also could not examine how the generation prior to the current one chose their place of residence. In future studies, I would like to further analyze the position of this community in relation to other communities in the area, as well as the villagers' migration history.

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