

Collective Sacred Time Perception and Sustainability Decision Vulnerability in Contemporary Hindu Communities

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ABSTRACT

The collective perception of sacred time in contemporary Hindu communities is an important aspect of understanding the relationship between religious practices, cultural values, and sustainability decisions in the midst of modern social change. This research aims to explore how the Hindu community interprets sacred time and how this meaning affects the vulnerability of sustainability decision-making. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design; Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation of 16 purposively selected informants, including religious leaders, traditional leaders, and community members. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis through the process of reduction, categorization, interpretation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study show that the ritual calendar, holy days, and dharma values form a collective consciousness in maintaining a socio-ecological balance. This research contributes to the development of religious studies and sustainability based on local wisdom

INTRODUCTION

Hinduism views time not only as a chronological order, but also as a sacred dimension that governs man's relationship with God, fellow humans, and nature. In contemporary Hindu communities, especially in Bali, the perception of sacred time is reflected through ritual calendars, holy days, ceremonial cycles, as well as religious practices such as Nyepi, Galungan, Kuningan, Tumpek Wariga, and yadnya. These sacred times shape the rhythm of social life and become the basis for collective decision-making, including decisions related to the environment and sustainability. The concept of Tri Hita Karana strengthens the view that sustainability cannot be separated from the harmony between *parahyangan*, *pawongan*, and *palemahan*. In the local context, Balinese Hindus face serious challenges in the form of land conversion, increased ritual waste, tourism pressures, and ecological crises; while globally, the climate crisis demands the involvement of religious values as the basis for sustainability ethics (Sutarya, 2021; Suja, 2022; Jenkins et al., 2021).

This phenomenon shows that the perception of sacred time has a strategic role in shaping the ecological awareness and collective action of the Hindu community. Holy days not only serve as a moment of worship, but also as a space for moral reflection on human responsibility towards nature. For example, Tumpek Wariga contains respect for plants, Tumpek Uye emphasizes concern for living beings, while Nyepi represents self-control, cessation of consumptive activities, and restoration of ecological balance. However, in contemporary society, these values face the pressures of modernization, cultural commercialization, and a change in economic orientation. As a result, community sustainability decisions can become vulnerable when sacred values are no longer fully the basis for social action, but instead shift to cultural symbols or mere ritual routines (Sudarsana, 2021; Widiastuti, 2022; Sari & Putra, 2023).

A number of previous studies have discussed the relationship between Hinduism, local wisdom, and sustainability. Wirawan (2021) explained that Tri Hita Karana can be the foundation of Balinese Hindu environmental ethics, while Adnyana and Darmayasa (2022) emphasized the importance of internalizing Hindu values in ecological character education. Suja (2022) also shows that Hindu local wisdom is relevant for building environmental awareness through education. On the other hand, international research such as Jenkins et al. (2021) and Taylor et al. (2022) confirms that religion can be an important source of value in responding to the climate crisis and global ecological change. Nonetheless, most of the research still focuses on ecological value, environmental education, or sustainable tourism in general. Studies that specifically link collective sacred time perceptions to sustainability decision-making vulnerabilities in contemporary Hindu communities are still relatively limited.

Despite the growing body of literature on Tri Hita Karana, Hindu ecotheology, and environmental ethics, previous studies have mainly emphasized normative relationships between religion and sustainability. Limited attention has been given to sacred time as a social-temporal structure influencing sustainability decision vulnerability. Furthermore, existing studies rarely explain why communities possessing strong ecological values may still

experience inconsistencies and vulnerabilities in sustainability practices under modernization pressures. Therefore, this study addresses these gaps by examining how collective sacred time perception influences sustainability decision vulnerability in contemporary Hindu communities.

This research is expected to make a theoretical and practical contribution. Theoretically, this study enriches the study of Hinduism, sociology of religion, anthropology of time, and sustainability studies by offering the perspective that sacred time is not only a ritual element, but also a cultural framework that can influence the ecological decisions of a community. This research also expands the understanding of the Tri Hita Karana as an ethical framework for reading the vulnerability of sustainability decisions in contemporary Hindu society. Practically, the results of this research can be an input for religious leaders, traditional institutions, temple managers, educators, and policymakers in designing sustainability strategies based on local values and the religious rhythms of the community. Thus, this research seeks to present a more contextual, religious, and applicative model of understanding sustainability in facing today's socio-ecological problems.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Collective Sacred Time as a Socio-Religious Structure in Hindu Communities

The perception of sacred time in the Hindu community cannot be understood only as a marker of the religious calendar, but as a socio-religious structure that regulates the rhythm of collective life. In the Hindu tradition, time is viewed cyclically and cosmically, reflected in the implementation of holiness, ceremonies, and repetitive ritual cycles. Religious calendars such as pawukon and saka not only determine when the community worships, but also shape when the community stops working, conducts spiritual reflection, strengthens social solidarity, and reaffirms the relationship between humans, nature, and the Divine. Thus, sacred time serves as a cultural mechanism that directs collective action in contemporary Hindu communities.

In the Balinese Hindu context, sacred time is closely related to religious practices such as Nyepi, Galungan, Kuningan, Tumpek Wariga, Tumpek Uye, and various forms of yadnya. These practices not only contain a ritual dimension, but also form a collective awareness of the orderliness of the cosmos and man's responsibility to the environment. A study on the integration of Tri Hita Karana local wisdom in the development of cultural tourism shows that Balinese Hindu values are not only present in the form of normative teachings, but are also embedded in the patterns of time, space, and social actions of the community (Integration of Tri Hita Karana Local Wisdom, 2025). This shows that sacred time can be understood as a cultural device that connects religious teachings with daily social practices.

However, in contemporary Hinduism, the perception of sacred time undergoes a process of negotiation with the demands of modernity. Industrial work schedules, tourism, formal education, urban mobility, and digital economy activities often create tension with traditional religious rhythms. This situation shows that sacred time is not always accepted in a stable manner, but continues

to be negotiated by the community according to socio-economic changes. Within the framework of this research, the collective perception of sacred time is important because it can explain how the Hindu community maintains sacred values while facing modern societal pressures that have the potential to influence sustainability decisions.

Hindu Ecotheology, Tri Hita Karana, and Sustainability Ethics

The literature on religion and the environment shows that religion has great potential as a source of ecological ethics. In Hinduism, man's relationship with nature is not seen as exploitative, but rather as part of a cosmic unity that must be kept in balance. The concept of Tri Hita Karana is one of the most important frameworks in understanding Balinese Hindu sustainability ethics because it emphasizes harmony between *parahyangan* or human relationship with God, *pawongan* or human relationship with others, and *palemahan* or human relationship with nature. These three dimensions show that sustainability in the Hindu perspective is not only concerned with the preservation of the physical environment, but also with spiritual and social balance.

Studies of Islamic-Hindu ecotheology in maintaining environmental sustainability show that religious values can be a moral basis for community-based environmental conservation and management practices (Islamic-Hindu Ecotheology, 2025). In the Hindu context, respect for nature, water, plants, animals, and sacred spaces is part of the expression of faith. This value is also seen in ritual practices that place nature not just as an object of use, but as an entity that has a sacred position. Thus, Hindu ecotheology provides the theoretical basis that sustainability decisions are not only shaped by economic rationality or technical policy, but also by the spiritual values that live in the community.

International studies of contemporary ecotheology also affirm the importance of religion as a source of ecological transformation. Baring and Molino (2023) show that ecotheology can shape the environmental awareness of the younger generation through religious interpretations of nature. Murad and Tavares (2023) also emphasize that ecotheology is not only doctrinal, but can be a praxis framework for building ecological justice and social responsibility. Although the two studies did not specifically address Balinese Hinduism, their findings are relevant because they show that religion can be an important basis in the formation of sustainable behaviors. In the context of this research, Hindu ecotheology and Tri Hita Karana are the basis for understanding how sacred values affect the vulnerability or resilience of communities in making sustainability decisions.

Rituals, Ecological Wisdom, and Community-Based Sustainability Practices

Hindu rituals have a strong ecological dimension because many religious practices are directly related to the elements of nature. Ceremonies that use water, flowers, leaves, fruits, fire, soil, and various natural means show that nature has an important place in Hindu religious expression. Rituals such as *Tumpek Wariga* can be read as a tribute to plants, while *Tumpek Uye* reflects concern for animals and living beings. In this context, rituals are not only symbolic acts, but also means of ecological education that are passed down collectively from generation to generation.

A study on environmental conservation by Muslims and Hindus in Klungkung, Bali shows that the value of scripture, local traditions, and community practices can encourage community participation in protecting the environment (The Role of Muslims and Hindus in Environmental Conservation, 2025). The research shows that religious communities have the social capacity to mobilize ecological awareness through religious leaders, customary institutions, and ritual practices. In Hindu communities, environmental management is often carried out not only through administrative approaches, but through customary norms, ritual obligations, and social agreements. This shows that community-based sustainability is highly dependent on the ability of communities to translate religious values into concrete ecological actions.

In addition, studies on traditional ecological knowledge and the sustainability of lake ecosystems in Bali show that local wisdom, water rituals, and respect for sacred areas have an important role in maintaining ecosystems (Integrating Traditional Ecological Knowledge, 2025). These findings are relevant to research on sacred time because religious rituals and calendars can govern when communities perform cleaning, veneration, activity restrictions, or resource management. Thus, sustainability practices arise not only from formal regulations, but also from the sacred rhythms that have been embedded in the collective life of Hindu society.

However, the literature also shows ambivalence. On the one hand, rituals can strengthen ecological awareness; On the other hand, contemporary ritual practices can produce environmental problems if they are accompanied by increased material consumption, plastic use, or commodification of ceremonial facilities. This condition shows that rituals need to be critically analyzed, not only as a source of ecological value, but also as a social practice that can undergo changes due to modernization. In this study, this ambivalence is the basis for understanding why communities with strong ecological values can still experience vulnerabilities in sustainability decision-making.

Modernization, Tourism, and Sustainability Decision Vulnerability

The vulnerability of sustainability decisions in contemporary Hindu communities arises when sacred values, economic pressures, and social change converge in the decision-making space. Hindu communities, particularly in Bali, live in a social environment that is heavily influenced by tourism, urbanization, land conversion, increased consumption, and lifestyle changes. Tourism does provide economic benefits, but it can also change people's relationships with sacred spaces, rituals, and the environment. In this situation, community decisions are often not entirely determined by religious values, but also by economic interests, market pressures, and the need to adapt to development.

A study of the change from anthropocentrism to ecocentrism in Bali confirms that environmental damage is largely related to land use change, vegetation degradation, and the weak application of local wisdom in spatial governance (From Anthropocentrism to Ecocentrism, 2025). The findings are important because they show that local values such as Tri Hita Karana are not always automatically able to prevent ecological crises if they are not supported by policies, institutions, and collective commitment. In other words, the existence

of sacred values does not guarantee strong sustainability decisions when communities are under intensive economic and development pressures.

Vulnerabilities are also seen in the management of water, land, and natural resources. A study of the carrying capacity of water resources on the island of Bali shows that the pressure on water is increasing due to population growth, tourism, and land use changes (Water Resources Carrying Capacity in the Bali Island, 2023). In Hindu communities, water has a sacred status because it is used in various rituals, temples, and socio-religious systems such as subak. When water resources are under pressure, it is not only the ecological aspect, but also the continuity of the community's religious and social practices that are affected. This shows that the vulnerability of sustainability decisions must be understood multidimensionally, including environmental, religious, economic, and institutional dimensions.

In international studies, Zhang (2024) explains that religious responses to ecological crises need to go beyond moral discourse towards more concrete social actions. This perspective is relevant for the Hindu community because sacred values need to be translated into operational decision-making mechanisms, such as ceremonial waste reduction, protection of sacred areas, water management, restriction of land use, and community-based tourism governance. Thus, the vulnerability of sustainability decisions has to do not only with the weakness of ecological knowledge, but also with the extent to which sacred values are able to be institutionalized in collective action.

Conceptual Synthesis and Research Gaps

Based on the literature review, it can be concluded that the Hindu community has strong religious and cultural capital to support sustainability. The perception of sacred time, rituals, Tri Hita Karana, and local ecological wisdom form a moral framework that connects humans to nature spiritually. Indonesian literature shows that sustainability practices in Hindu communities rely heavily on local values, traditional institutions, rituals, and sacred relationships with the environment. Meanwhile, the international literature confirms that religion can be a source of ecological ethics, moral transformation, and social movements to respond to the global environmental crisis (Baring & Molino, 2023; Murad & Tavares, 2023; Zhang, 2024).

However, there are important loopholes in previous research. Most studies still discuss Hinduism, Tri Hita Karana, and sustainability as a normative relationship between religious values and the environment. These studies have not examined how the perception of collective sacred time specifically affects the sustainability decision-making process. In fact, sacred time determines when the community performs rituals, when economic activities are stopped, when resources are used, and when moral reflection is carried out. In other words, sacred time is not only a ritual context, but also a social-temporal structure that can influence the ecological decisions of the community.

Another gap lies in the lack of studies that link sacred values with the concept of sustainability decision vulnerability. Previous literature has tended to emphasize the potential value of Hinduism as a basis for sustainability, but has not sufficiently explained why communities with strong ecological values can

still experience decisions that are vulnerable to economic pressures, tourism, modernization, and cultural commodification. Therefore, the research titled "Collective Sacred Time Perception and Sustainability Decision Vulnerability in Contemporary Hindu Communities" has an important position to fill this void. This research places sacred time as an analytical framework for understanding how religious values work, negotiate, and sometimes weaken in the sustainability decision-making process of contemporary Hindu communities.

Theoretically, this study expands the discussion of religion and sustainability by adding the temporal dimension as a cultural variable that influences social actions. Practically, this study can help religious leaders, traditional institutions, temple managers, local communities, and policymakers to design sustainability strategies that are more in line with the sacred rhythms of Hindu society. Thus, this literature review emphasizes that Hindu-based sustainability is not sufficiently understood through normative values, but needs to be studied through the relationship between sacred time, collective practices, the pressures of modernity, and the vulnerability of community decisions.

METHODOLOGY

Types of Research

This study employed a qualitative approach with a multiple-case study design. The research was conducted in selected contemporary Hindu communities in Bali Province, Indonesia, where ritual calendars, holy days, and socio-religious practices remain actively maintained. Bali was selected because the region represents a socio-cultural setting in which sacred time and the concept of Tri Hita Karana continue to influence collective life and environmental practices. The case study design enabled an in-depth exploration of how sacred time is interpreted and how these interpretations shape sustainability decision vulnerability under contemporary socio-economic pressures. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for examining socio-religious phenomena that are contextual, symbolic, and grounded in individuals' subjective experiences (Fadli, 2021). Furthermore, case studies facilitate a comprehensive understanding of social phenomena through multiple sources of evidence, including interviews, observations, and documentation (Assyakurrohim et al., 2023).

Population and Sample

The population in this study is a contemporary Hindu community that still practices Hindu values-based rituals, holy days, and socio-religious activities. The research informants were selected using a non-probability sampling technique with the purposive sampling method, which is the selection of informants based on their involvement and knowledge of the phenomenon being studied. The study involved sixteen informants selected through purposive sampling, consisting of Hindu religious leaders, customary leaders, temple administrators, and community members. The number of participants was determined based on information richness and data saturation principles. The selection of this number is based on the need for depth of data and the potential to achieve information saturation, as explained by Hennink and Kaiser

(2022) that the adequacy of informants in qualitative research is determined by the depth and repetition of the theme, not by the number of statistics.

Research Instruments

The main instrument in this study is the researcher himself as a key instrument, assisted by interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation formats. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner so that the researcher still had the direction of the question, but the informant remained free to explain his experiences and views in depth. Interview questions include the meaning of sacred time, the role of the ritual calendar, dharma values, the Tri Hita Karana, as well as factors that affect the vulnerability of sustainability decisions. Observation is used to record ritual practices and community activities, while documentation is used to supplement data through archives, ceremonial schedules, community records, and customary documents. The validity of the data is maintained through source triangulation, technical triangulation, and member checking.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection is carried out through several stages. The initial stage includes preparing research focus, determining location, preparing instruments, and managing permits to communities or customary institutions. After that, the researcher selected informants according to the criteria that had been set, namely individuals who understood or were involved in ritual practices, community decision-making, and sustainability activities. Key data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations on religious or social community activities, and documentation. All data is recorded, recorded with the consent of the informant, then transcribed systematically. The identity of the informant is disguised to maintain the confidentiality and ethics of the research.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data was analyzed using thematic analysis. This technique is used to identify patterns of meaning that emerge from interviews, observations, and documentation. The analysis process is carried out through the stage of reading data repeatedly, coding important information, grouping the code into categories, arranging themes, and then interpreting the relationships between themes. The themes analyzed include the perception of collective sacred time, the ritual calendar as a regulator of social life, the value of dharma and Tri Hita Karana, the pressure of modernity, and the vulnerability of sustainability decisions. Analysis is assisted using software such as NVivo to facilitate data encoding and grouping. The quality of the analysis is maintained through procedural consistency, triangulation, trail audits, and interpretation based on field data (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Wiltshire & Ronkainen, 2021).

RESEARCH RESULTS

Perception of Sacred Time as a Marker of the Collective Identity of the Hindu Community

The first findings suggest that sacred time is understood by the Hindu community not simply as a religious schedule, but as a marker of collective identity. Informants interpret holy days, ritual calendars, and ceremonial cycles as an important part of social life that distinguishes ordinary time from time that

has spiritual value. Sacred time is understood as a moment when the community renews its relationship with God, ancestors, fellow humans, and nature.

Most informants stated that religious activities were carried out not only because of ritual obligations, but also because of the awareness that social life should follow a time order that was considered sacred. In practice, days such as *Nyepi*, *Galungan*, *Kuningan*, and *Tumpek* become a meeting point between spirituality, togetherness, and strengthening community values.

One of the informants of the religious leader said:

"If we talk about holy time, it's not just a date on the calendar. It is time to recall our relationship with Ida Sang Hyang Widhi, with family, with the environment. So people know when to stop, when to clean themselves, and when to protect nature." (IA-01, interview, March 12, 2026)

Another informant from elements of community members stated that holy days make people feel a sense of bond:

"If you are close to Galungan or Kuningan, the atmosphere of the village changes. People began to do ngayah, clean, and prepare ceremonies. It felt like the holy time made us gather again." (IM-03, interview, March 15, 2026)

The results of observations also show that ahead of the holy day, community activities increase in the form of ritual preparations, cleaning of temple areas, coordination between residents, and the division of traditional tasks. This shows that sacred time does not only live in individual understanding, but is manifested in organized collective action.

Ritual Calendar as a Regulator of Social Rhythms and Community Decisions

The second finding suggests that the ritual calendar serves as a tool to regulate the social rhythms of the Hindu community. The religious calendar is used to determine the time of the implementation of ceremonies, mutual cooperation activities, community meetings, environmental cleanup, and decisions related to the use of space and resources. Thus, the ritual calendar has not only a religious function, but also a social and ecological function.

The informants explained that community decisions are often adjusted to a particular good day, holy day, or ritual momentum. Community administrators stated that environmental activities are easier to carry out when they are associated with a religious agenda because people feel that they have a moral obligation to participate.

A traditional leader explained:

"If temple cleaning activities or environmental cleansing activities are made close to holy days, residents usually find it easier to participate. They feel that it is part of an obligation, not just an ordinary act of devotion." (IA-03, interview, March 18, 2026)

Community administrators also affirm that ritual calendars help organize shared decisions:

"We usually look at the schedule of the ceremony first. If there are traditional or environmental activities, the time must be adjusted. You can't just decide the day, because the community has a time benchmark that has been trusted together." (IP-02, interview, March 20, 2026)

Community documentation shows that there are routine agendas that follow the religious calendar, such as cleaning the temple before the big day, preparing ceremonial facilities, traditional meetings, and social activities. This data shows that sacred time acts as a social-temporal structure that influences how communities organize collective activities.

Holy Day as a Space for Ecological Reflection and Self-Control

The third finding suggests that some holy days in Hinduism are understood by the community as spaces for ecological reflection. *Nyepi*, for example, is understood as a momentum for self-control, cessation of consumptive activities, noise reduction, and restoration of balance. Meanwhile, *Tumpek Wariga* is associated with respect for plants, and *Tumpek Uye* is associated with respect for animals and living things.

The informant sees these holy days as a reminder that man cannot live in isolation from nature. In the informant's narrative, nature is not only seen as a resource, but also as part of a sacred life that needs to be respected.

A religious leader said:

"*Nyepi teaches us to stop. Not just stop working, but stop excessive desires. Nature is also like being given space to breathe.*" (IA-02, interview, March 13, 2026)

A community member added:

"*During Tumpek Wariga, we were reminded that trees and plants also have a role in human life. So it's not only worn, but also respected.*" (IM-01, interview, March 16, 2026)

The results of the observation show that at a certain momentum, the community carried out activities to clean the temple area, arrange plants, use natural facilities in ceremonies, and restrict certain activities. These findings suggest that holy days have the potential to be an ecological awareness booster, especially when the value of rituals is understood substantively by communities.

The Value of Dharma and Tri Hita Karana as the Basis for Sustainability Decisions

The fourth finding shows that the values of dharma and Tri Hita Karana are the moral basis in understanding sustainability. Informants interpret sustainability not only as an environmental issue, but as an ethical and spiritual obligation to maintain a balance between humans and God, humans and others, and humans and nature.

In the informant's narrative, a good decision is a decision that not only benefits humans economically, but also maintains social harmony and environmental sustainability. The concept of *palemahan* in *Tri Hita Karana* appears as an important reference when informants explain the relationship between Hinduism and ecological responsibility.

A traditional figure stated:

"*If you only think about profit, it is not necessarily according to the dharma. A good decision should maintain a relationship with nature as well. If nature is damaged, traditional life and ceremonies are also disrupted.*" (IA-04, interview, March 21, 2026)

The temple administrator explained that *the value of Tri Hita Karana* is often the basis for reminding residents:

"We often say that maintaining the temple environment is not only a matter of cleanliness. That's part of the palemahan. If the environment is dirty, the sense of holiness is also reduced." (IP-01, interview, March 19, 2026)

These findings suggest that religious values play a role as a normative guideline in sustainability decisions. However, the strength of these values depends largely on the extent to which the community translates them into practical actions, such as waste management, the use of environmentally friendly ceremonial facilities, and the maintenance of sacred spaces.

Vulnerability of Sustainability Decisions due to Modernization and Economic Pressures

The fifth finding shows a vulnerability in sustainability decision-making when communities are faced with modernization pressures, economic needs, tourism, and lifestyle changes. Some informants stated that sacred values were still respected, but daily practices were often influenced by practical, quick, cheap, and easy considerations.

Vulnerabilities can be seen in the increasingly consumptive use of ceremonial materials, the increasing use of plastics, the reduced time of the younger generation to engage in community activities, and changes in community orientation due to work and economic activities. In some cases, ecologically ideal community decisions are difficult to implement because they are considered to require greater cost, time, and coordination.

A community member said:

"Now many people choose the practical ones. Means of the ceremony are bought so much, sometimes there is a lot of plastic. Actually I knew it wasn't good, but because of limited time, it ended up being used as well." (IM-04, interview, March 24, 2026)

Indigenous leaders also conveyed the dilemma between ideal values and economic needs

"We want to maintain customary and environmental rules, but the community also has economic needs. Sometimes the most environmentally friendly decisions are not immediately acceptable if they are considered to add to the cost." (IA-05, interview, March 25, 2026)

The results of observations show that in some ritual activities, the use of single-use plastics, modern packaging, and non-natural ceremonial facilities is still found. However, in certain activities, there are also efforts to reduce waste through the sorting of organic and inorganic materials. These findings suggest that communities are in a transitional situation between ecologically sacred values and more consumptive modern practices.

Generational Change and Weakening of Understanding of Ritual Meaning

The sixth finding suggests that generational differences affect the depth of understanding of sacred time and the value of sustainability. Informants from religious and traditional groups tend to understand sacred time as part of a cosmic order and moral obligation. Meanwhile, some informants from the younger generation interpret the holy day more as a family tradition, traditional activity, or social obligation that must be followed.

This difference does not mean that the younger generation rejects religious values, but it shows a shift in the depth of meaning. Some informants stated that

the younger generation still participates in ritual activities, but does not always understand the ecological and philosophical meaning behind the practice.

A community administrator said:

"Young people are still participating in ngayah, still participating in the ceremony. But if asked the meaning of Tumpek or why we have to take care of plants, not all of them can explain. They come because they are used to it." (IP-03, interview, March 22, 2026)

A young community member said:

"I participate in traditional activities because my family and the environment are like that. If the meaning of the details is sometimes known a little, but not as deep as parents." (IM-02, interview, March 17, 2026)

These findings suggest that sustainability based on sacred values requires a stronger process of meaning inheritance. If the meaning of ritual is only understood as a habit, then its potential as a basis for sustainability decisions can be weakened.

The Role of Religious Leaders and Indigenous Leaders in Maintaining a Sustainability Orientation

The seventh finding shows that religious leaders and traditional leaders have an important role in maintaining the relationship between sacred time, Hindu values, and sustainability decisions. Religious leaders play a role in providing spiritual explanations about the meaning of holy days, while traditional leaders and community administrators play a role in regulating the implementation of collective activities.

The informant mentioned that community decisions are easier to accept when they are conveyed through religious and customary languages. For example, the invitation to maintain the cleanliness of the temple environment is more effective when it is associated with the sanctity of the sacred space, not just with the general hygiene rules. Likewise, the invitation to reduce ceremonial waste is more easily accepted when it is associated with *dharma* and *palemahan* values.

A religious leader said:

"If environmental messages are conveyed only as a rule, sometimes people hear it normally. But if it is explained that preserving nature is part of the dharma, they feel more responsible." (IA-06, interview, March 26, 2026)

The traditional leader added:

"Decisions in the community must be slow. If you want to change habits, for example reducing plastic in ceremonies, it must be explained from the perspective of customs and religion so that residents do not feel forced." (IA-07, interview, March 27, 2026)

These findings show that the success of sustainability decisions depends not only on technical rules, but also on socio-religious legitimacy. Religious leaders and traditional leaders are key actors in connecting sacred values with collective action.

Community Adaptation Practices to Sustainability Issues

The eighth finding suggests that communities are not only experiencing vulnerability, but are also beginning to develop local value-based sustainability adaptation practices. Some forms of adaptation found include the reuse of certain

facilities, sorting organic and non-organic waste, reducing plastic in religious activities, mutual cooperation to clean temple areas, and informal education on the importance of protecting the environment.

Although the practice is not yet completely evenly distributed, the results of the interviews show an early awareness that ritual and sustainability need to be aligned. Some informants stated that the changes should be made gradually so as not to cause social resistance.

A community administrator explained:

"We have started to remind residents to bring their own places or reduce plastic during activities. Not all of them have participated, but there have been small changes." (IP-04, interview, March 28, 2026)

Other community members shared:

"In the past, after the garbage ceremony, everything was mixed. Now it has begun to be separated, which is organic, which is plastic. It is not perfect, but there is already awareness." (IM-05, interview, March 29, 2026)

The results of observations support this statement. In several community activities, there was a place for waste sorting, the use of natural materials, and a verbal invitation from the management for residents to keep the temple area clean. However, this practice is still situational and has not fully become a formally documented community policy.

Sustainability Decision Vulnerability Patterns Based on Field Data

Based on the results of data encoding, several forms of vulnerability were found that appeared most often in interviews and observations. These vulnerabilities do not stand alone, but are interrelated between economic, social, cultural, and institutional factors.

Table 1. Sustainability Decision Vulnerability Patterns Based on Field Data

Forms of Vulnerability	Indications of Field Findings	Impact on Community Decisions
Ritual practices that are increasingly consumptive	Use of instant ceremonial facilities and plastic packaging	Ecological decisions are often defeated by reasons of practicality
Economic pressures	The cost of eco-friendly materials is considered higher	Communities are choosing cheaper options even though they are less sustainable
Tourism and cultural commercialization	Rituals and sacred spaces are part of the tourist attraction	Sacred meaning risks shifting to cultural display
Generational changes	The younger generation follows the ritual but does not always understand its meaning	The inheritance of ecological values becomes less profound
Weak technical rules	There is no consistent community policy on ritual waste	Sustainability practices depend on individual awareness

Time limitations	Citizens are busy with modern jobs and activities	Participation in collective activities is not always optimal
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The table shows that the vulnerability of sustainability decisions arises not because of the loss of religious values, but because of the distance between the sacred values believed and the social practices that are practiced. The community still recognizes the importance of harmony with nature, but its application faces practical obstacles in contemporary life.

Important Findings That Answer Research Objectives

Overall, the results of the study show that the collective perception of sacred time has an important role in shaping the socio-ecological consciousness of the Hindu community. The ritual calendar, holy days, and *dharma values* are the basis for moral orientation in maintaining a balance between humans, God, others, and nature. Sacred time also serves as a social mechanism that regulates collective activities, strengthens solidarity, and forms a momentum of ecological reflection.

However, the results also show that the perception of sacred time does not automatically result in strong sustainability decisions. Vulnerabilities arise when communities face modernization pressures, economic needs, the use of practical materials in rituals, generational changes, and the lack of strong technical rules related to sustainability. Thus, the relationship between sacred time and sustainability is dynamic: on the one hand it becomes a source of ecological awareness, but on the other hand it can weaken if the sacred meaning is not translated into concrete community action.

The most prominent finding of the study is that sacred time acts as a social-temporal structure that influences community decision-making. Decisions regarding environmental activities, temple cleaning, the use of ceremonial facilities, and the regulation of social activities often follow the ritual momentum. However, the effectiveness of sacred time as the basis for sustainability is greatly influenced by community actors, the strength of traditional values, the understanding of the younger generation, and the community's ability to manage modern economic pressures.

Indicative Differences with Previous Research

The results of this study show a difference in emphasis compared to some previous studies. Previous studies have generally placed *Tri Hita Karana*, Hindu rituals, and ecological values as the normative foundation of sustainability. Meanwhile, the results of this study show that sacred values need to be understood not only as teachings, but also as a practice that is negotiated in certain social situations.

The main difference lies in the focus of this research which places sacred time as an important element in the decision-making process. The findings show that ritual calendars and holy days not only become religious symbols, but also influence when communities move, gather, make decisions, and take ecological actions. In addition, the study found that communities with strong ecological

values can still experience decision vulnerability when faced with economic pressures, practical consumption, tourism, and generational change.

Thus, the results of this study expand on previous findings by showing that religious-based sustainability is not sufficiently explained through the existence of Hindu values alone, but needs to be seen from how these values are carried out in the rhythm of sacred time, community structures, and contemporary socio-economic conditions.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that the collective perception of sacred time in contemporary Hindu communities serves as a social-temporal structure that regulates the rhythm of religious, social, and ecological life of the community. Sacred time is not only understood as a marker of the ritual calendar, but also as a framework of meaning that determines when the community gathers, reflects, cleanses sacred spaces, and makes collective decisions. Holy days such as Nyepi, Galungan, Kuningan, Tumpek Wariga, and Tumpek Uye are important moments to strengthen solidarity, collective identity, and awareness of human balance with God, others, and nature. These findings are in line with the study of religion and ecology which views religion as a value system capable of shaping collective behavior towards the environment (Grim & Tucker, 2021; Sponsel, 2022).

The findings of the study also show that the Hindu ritual calendar acts as a mechanism for regulating community decisions. Temple cleaning activities, mutual cooperation, traditional deliberations, the use of ceremonial facilities, and environmental management are often adjusted to the momentum of the holy day. Thus, the ritual calendar has not only a spiritual function, but also a social and organizational function. The novelty of this research lies in the placement of sacred time as a cultural variable that actively shapes sustainability decisions, not just the background for ritual implementation. This research connects three main concepts, namely collective sacred time perception, sustainability decision vulnerability, and contemporary Hindu communities, which have not been discussed in an integrated manner in previous studies.

The values of dharma and Tri Hita Karana are found as a moral basis in sustainability decision-making. Informants interpret a good decision as a decision that is not only economically profitable, but also maintains harmony between parahyangan, pawongan, and palemahan. In this context, maintaining the cleanliness of the temple, reducing ceremonial waste, using natural materials, and caring for the environment are understood as part of the practice of the dharma. These findings strengthen the position of Tri Hita Karana as a socio-ecological ethical framework for the Balinese Hindu community, as affirmed in a study on Hindu values and the sustainability of local communities (Pramana, 2022; Yasa, 2021).

Nonetheless, the study found that the existence of sacred values does not automatically result in consistent sustainability decisions. Communities still face vulnerability to sustainability decisions due to modernization pressures, economic needs, tourism, the use of instant ceremonial facilities, time constraints, and lifestyle changes. Normatively, communities recognize the importance of

harmony with nature, but in practice cheaper, quicker, and practical options are often more dominant. This is where the novelty of the research gets stronger, as it not only confirms the ecological potential of Hinduism, but also shows the tension between sacred values and contemporary social practices.

Generational changes are also an important factor that affects the results of the research. Older generations, especially religious and traditional leaders, tend to understand sacred time as part of the cosmic order and moral obligation. On the other hand, some of the younger generation still follow the ritual, but do not always understand its philosophical and ecological meaning in depth. This shows that ritual participation is not necessarily synonymous with the internalization of values. Therefore, the inheritance of values needs to be carried out through contextual education and inter-generational dialogue so that the ecological meaning of sacred time does not weaken (Rai & Suastika, 2021; Suryawan, 2023).

Religious leaders and traditional leaders play an important role as a link between sacred values and sustainability actions. The invitation to protect the environment is easier to accept when conveyed through the language of religion, customs, and dharma. Thus, sustainability in Hindu communities requires socio-religious legitimacy, not just technical rules. However, dependence on certain figures is also a weakness if it is not followed by the institutionalization of values in more systematic community rules.

This research also found the emergence of community adaptation practices, such as plastic reduction, organic and inorganic waste sorting, reuse of certain facilities, mutual cooperation to clean temples, and informal education on environmental cleanliness. This practice shows that communities have the capacity to adapt to sustainability challenges. However, the practice is still gradual and has not been fully institutionalized. Therefore, ritual-based moral awareness needs to be developed into a more consistent community governance system.

Theoretically, this research contributes by expanding the study of Hinduism and sustainability through the temporal dimension. While previous research has placed more emphasis on local values, rituals, or wisdom, this study suggests that sacred time is a social mechanism that influences sustainability decisions. Meanwhile, the concept of sustainability decision vulnerability helps explain why communities with strong ecological values can still experience inconsistencies in sustainability practices.

Practically, the results of this study show that sustainability strategies in the Hindu community should be prepared by paying attention to the ritual calendar and the momentum of holy days. Waste reduction programs, environmental education, water conservation, and the use of environmentally friendly ceremonial facilities will be more effective when associated with the values of dharma, Tri Hita Karana, and the religious rhythm of the community. In this way, sustainability policies are not only present as external instructions, but become part of the spiritual consciousness and identity of the community.

This study has limitations because it uses a case study design with a limited number of informants, so the findings are not intended to be statistically

generalized. The study also did not compare Hindu communities in rural, urban, tourism areas, and the diaspora, nor did it follow a full ritual calendar cycle. Therefore, further research is recommended using a multi-site design, longitudinal approach, or mixed method to test the relationship between understanding sacred time, ritual participation, and sustainability behaviors more broadly.

Thus, The novelty of this study lies in three aspects. First, it conceptualizes collective sacred time as a social-temporal structure that influences sustainability-related decisions. Second, it introduces the concept of sustainability decision vulnerability to explain tensions between sacred values and contemporary socio-economic pressures. Third, it demonstrates that faith-based sustainability should be understood not merely as a normative doctrine but as a dynamic social practice continuously negotiated within contemporary Hindu communities.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that the collective perception of sacred time in contemporary Hindu communities plays an important role as a social-temporal structure that regulates the rhythm of religious, social, and ecological life of the community. The ritual calendar, holy days, dharma values, and the concept of Tri Hita Karana form the collective consciousness of the community in maintaining a balance between humans and God, fellow humans, and nature. Sacred time is not only understood as a schedule for the implementation of rituals, but also as a cultural framework that influences when communities gather, reflect, clean sacred spaces, carry out *ngayah*, and make decisions related to sustainability. However, the study also found that these sacred values do not necessarily automatically result in consistent sustainability decisions. Vulnerabilities arise due to modernization pressures, economic needs, tourism, the use of ceremonial facilities that are increasingly practical and consumptive, generational changes, and the lack of strong technical rules in the management of the community environment. Thus, the novelty of this research lies in the understanding that sacred time is not only part of the Hindu ritual system, but also a social mechanism that can strengthen or weaken sustainability decisions according to the way the community interprets and applies them in daily life.

Based on these findings, Hindu communities, religious leaders, traditional leaders, temple managers, customary institutions, educators, and policymakers are advised to integrate the value of sacred time, dharma, and Tri Hita Karana into a more practical and institutionalized sustainability strategy. Ceremonial waste reduction programs, the use of environmentally friendly ritual facilities, organic and inorganic waste sorting, water conservation, and ecological education should be associated with the momentum of holy days and ritual calendars so that they are more easily accepted by the community. In addition, it is necessary to strengthen cross-generational education so that the younger generation not only follows rituals as a habit, but also understands the philosophical and ecological meaning behind them. Further research is recommended using a multi-site design, longitudinal approach, or mixed

method to compare Hindu communities in rural, urban, tourism areas, and the diaspora, as well as to examine the relationship between understanding sacred time, ritual participation, and sustainability behaviors more broadly.

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