

# Integrating The *Tri Hita Karana* Philosophy into Sustainable Economic Education: An Analysis of Student Perceptions at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha

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**Abstract:** Sustainable economic education emphasizes the importance of achieving equilibrium among economic, social, and environmental aspects within the learning process. One local philosophical framework aligned with this principle is the *Tri Hita Karana* concept, which promotes harmony among humans and God (*parahyangan*), humans and others (*pawongan*), and humans and nature (*palemahan*). Rooted in Balinese cultural wisdom, this philosophy provides an ethical foundation that enriches the moral and ecological perspectives of economic education. This study aims to analyze the perceptions of Economics Education students at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha (Undiksha) regarding the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* principles in supporting sustainable economic learning. The research employed a quantitative descriptive method, with data collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to 100 active students in the Economics Education Study Program. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including the calculation of mean scores and percentage levels across the three main dimensions of *Tri Hita Karana*. The findings reveal that students hold positive perceptions toward the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* values in sustainable economic education. The *parahyangan* dimension achieved an average score of 4.31 (86.2%), indicating a strong awareness of spirituality and moral responsibility. The *pawongan* dimension recorded an average score of 4.25 (85%), reflecting appreciation for social ethics, cooperation, and empathy. The *palemahan* dimension obtained an average score of 4.18 (83.6%), signifying concern for environmental and resource sustainability. Overall, the integration of *Tri Hita Karana*'s local wisdom provides a relevant and effective pedagogical approach to advancing sustainable economic education by cultivating ethical, socially responsible, and environmentally conscious learners.

**Keywords:** *Tri Hita Karana*, student perceptions, sustainable economic education.

## Introduction

The growing global concern over environmental degradation, social inequality, and unsustainable economic practices has prompted an urgent need to transform educational paradigms, especially in the field of economics (Dewi et al., 2025; Karimi et al., 2024; Meyer, 2023; Pamella, 2024; Tallgauer & Schank, 2023). Traditional economic education often prioritizes profit maximization and market efficiency, while overlooking broader ethical, social, and environmental dimensions. In response to these challenges, the concept of sustainable economic education has emerged as an

interdisciplinary framework that seeks to balance economic growth with social well-being and ecological preservation (Agrawal et al., 2024; Annelin & Boström, 2024; Cerf, 2023). This approach not only equips students with technical economic skills but also nurtures responsible values and sustainable mindsets essential for addressing 21st-century challenges.

Within this global discourse, integrating local wisdom into education offers a culturally grounded pathway toward sustainability. Local philosophies provide moral and ethical guidance that resonates deeply with community values, allowing sustainability concepts to be understood

not merely as abstract theories but as lived practices. In Bali, one profound philosophical framework that aligns with the principles of sustainability is *Tri Hita Karana* (THK). Literally meaning “three causes of well-being,” *Tri Hita Karana* emphasizes harmonious relationships among humans and God (*parahyangan*), humans and other people (*pawongan*), and humans and the natural environment (*palemahan*) (Arimbawa et al., 2019). This holistic view promotes the idea that true prosperity can only be achieved when spiritual, social, and ecological harmony are maintained simultaneously.

Incorporating *Tri Hita Karana* into economic education provides an opportunity to bridge global sustainability principles with local cultural wisdom. The philosophy embodies the essence of ethical economics by encouraging spiritual awareness, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship three pillars that correspond directly to the goals of sustainable development (Sukendri et al., 2023; Suryawan et al., 2024; Yulisinta et al., 2024). For students of economics education, such integration is particularly meaningful, as it not only deepens their conceptual understanding of sustainable economic systems but also shapes their attitudes and behavior toward ethical decision-making. In this sense, *Tri Hita Karana* serves as both a philosophical foundation and a pedagogical approach that connects sustainability concepts with contextual, value-based learning experiences.

Furthermore, aligning economic education with *Tri Hita Karana* principles is consistent with the broader objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 on Quality Education and Goal 12 on Responsible Consumption and Production. By fostering students’ awareness of interdependence between humans, society, and the environment, educational institutions can cultivate graduates who are capable of contributing to a more just, inclusive, and sustainable economic future (Djirong et al., 2024; Kurdiati & Fathurohman\*, 2024; Thian et al., 2025) .

Despite its philosophical richness and relevance, empirical studies exploring how *Tri Hita Karana* values are perceived and internalized within the

context of economic education remain limited. Understanding students’ perceptions of these values is essential, as it reflects how effectively the principles of harmony and sustainability are embedded in learning processes and educational outcomes.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the perceptions of Economics Education students at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha (Undiksha) regarding the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* principles in supporting sustainable economic learning. By identifying students’ levels of awareness and appreciation across the three dimensions of *Tri Hita Karana*, *parahyangan*, *pawongan*, and *palemahan* this research seeks to provide insights into how local cultural wisdom can enhance the moral, social, and environmental dimensions of economic education.

## Materials And Methods

### Study area

This study was conducted at the Economics Education Study Program, Faculty of Economics, Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha (Undiksha), located in Singaraja, Buleleng Regency, Bali, Indonesia. Undiksha is a leading educational institution in northern Bali, recognized for its commitment to integrating local cultural values into academic curricula. The university’s strategic emphasis on character-based and sustainability-oriented education provides a conducive environment for exploring the intersection of local wisdom and modern pedagogical frameworks. Bali, as the cultural context of this study, is deeply rooted in the *Tri Hita Karana* philosophy, which guides social and environmental interactions within the community. This local wisdom emphasizes harmony among humans and God (*parahyangan*), humans and others (*pawongan*), and humans and nature (*palemahan*). These values are not only embedded in daily life but also increasingly incorporated into formal education, particularly in disciplines related to economics and social sciences. By situating the research within Undiksha’s Economics Education program, the study captures the perspectives of future educators

who play a vital role in promoting sustainable economic practices. The selection of this study area allows for a focused investigation into how local philosophical principles specifically *Tri Hita Karana* can be integrated into sustainable economic education to foster ethical awareness, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship among students.

### Procedures

The research was conducted through several systematic stages to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the findings. The procedures followed are described as follows:

#### 1. Research Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive design aimed at analyzing students' perceptions regarding the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* values in sustainable economic education. This design was selected to obtain measurable data representing the overall tendencies and attitudes of the participants toward the three dimensions of *Tri Hita Karana*: *parahyangan*, *pawongan*, and *palemahan*.

#### 2. Population and Sample

The population consisted of all active students enrolled in the Economics Education Study Program at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha (Undiksha). Using purposive sampling, 100 respondents were selected to represent different academic years, ensuring diverse perspectives on the integration of local wisdom in the learning process.

#### 3. Instrument Development

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed based on the three dimensions of the *Tri Hita Karana* philosophy. The instrument consisted of Likert-scale items (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), measuring students' perceptions of spirituality and moral responsibility (*parahyangan*), social ethics and cooperation (*pawongan*), and environmental awareness (*palemahan*). The questionnaire's validity and reliability were tested through expert judgment and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, confirming its internal consistency.

### 4. Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed online and in person to ensure accessibility for all participants. Respondents were given clear instructions regarding the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of their responses. Data collection was completed over a two-week period during the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.

### Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study employed quantitative descriptive techniques to summarize and interpret the findings in a systematic and objective manner. The main purpose of the analysis was to determine the level of students' perceptions regarding the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* values: *parahyangan*, *pawongan*, and *palemahan* within sustainable economic education.

#### 1. Data Preparation

All collected responses were first checked for completeness and accuracy. Incomplete or inconsistent responses were excluded from the analysis. The valid data were then coded numerically according to the Likert scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

#### 2. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the mean score and percentage level of each item and dimension. These measures provided a clear depiction of the respondents' tendencies and agreement levels toward each aspect of *Tri Hita Karana*. The formula applied for the calculation was:

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

where:

$\sum X$  = total score of all respondents,

$N$  = number of respondents.

The percentage level was computed as follows:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Mean}}{5} \times 100\%$$

### 3. Interpretation Criteria

To interpret the mean and percentage results, the following categorization scale was adopted:

**Tabel 1.** Categorization Scale.

| Mean Range  | Percentage Range | Interpretation Level |
|-------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1.00 – 1.79 | 20% – 35.8%      | Very Low             |
| 1.80 – 2.59 | 36% – 51.8%      | Low                  |
| 2.60 – 3.39 | 52% – 67.8%      | Moderate             |
| 3.40 – 4.19 | 68% – 83.8%      | High                 |
| 4.20 – 5.00 | 84% – 100%       | Very High            |

These interpretation levels were used to assess the strength of students' perceptions in each dimension of *Tri Hita Karana*.

### 4. Dimensional Analysis

Each dimension (*parahyangan*, *pawongan*, and *palemahan*) was analyzed separately to identify its specific contribution to students' overall perception. The comparison across dimensions allowed for the identification of which aspects of *Tri Hita Karana* were most strongly reflected in students' attitudes and understanding of sustainable economic education.

### 5. Result Synthesis

Finally, the analyzed data were synthesized to draw meaningful conclusions about the role of *Tri Hita Karana* in shaping students' moral, social, and environmental awareness. The results were then linked to the broader framework of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 (Quality Education) and Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

## Results And Discussion

### Data Descriptive

The study involved 100 active students enrolled in the Economics Education Study Program at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha (Undiksha).

Respondents were chosen using purposive sampling to ensure that participants represented diverse academic years and learning experiences in sustainable economic education.

**Table 2.** Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

| No | Category      | Subcategory | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) |
|----|---------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1  | Gender        | Female      | 68            | 68.0           |
|    |               | Male        | 32            | 32.0           |
|    |               | Total       | 100           | 100.0          |
| 2  | Year of Study | First Year  | 25            | 25.0           |
|    |               | Second Year | 30            | 30.0           |
|    |               | Third Year  | 28            | 28.0           |
|    |               | Fourth Year | 17            | 17.0           |
|    |               | Total       | 100           | 100.0          |

The demographic profile indicates that the majority of respondents were female (68%), while male students constituted 32% of the sample. This composition reflects the general enrollment pattern within the Economics Education Study Program at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha (Undiksha). In terms of academic year distribution, first-year students accounted for 25%, second-year for 30%, third-year for 28%, and fourth-year for 17%. This proportional distribution ensures representation across all academic levels, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions regarding the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* principles in sustainable economic education.

### Student's Perception of Tri Hita Karana in Economic Education

The findings of this study illustrate students' perceptions of the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* values, *Parahyangan* (spiritual harmony), *Pawongan* (social harmony), and *Palemahan* (environmental harmony), within the framework of sustainable economic education. The overall results show that students exhibit a very positive perception toward the implementation of these principles in economic learning activities.

**Table 3.** Overall Students' Perception of Tri Hita Karana Dimensions.

| No      | Dimension                              | Mean Score | Percentage (%) | Category  |
|---------|----------------------------------------|------------|----------------|-----------|
| 1       | <i>Parahyangan</i> (Harmony with God)  | 4.31       | 86.2           | Very High |
| 2       | <i>Pawongan</i> (Harmony among Humans) | 4.25       | 85.0           | Very High |
| 3       | <i>Palemahan</i> (Harmony with Nature) | 4.18       | 83.6           | High      |
| Average |                                        | 4.25       | 85.0           | Very High |

The overall mean score of 4.25 (85%) indicates that students hold very high perceptions regarding the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* into economic education. Each dimension contributes uniquely to building ethical awareness, social empathy, and environmental responsibility among students.

### 1. Parahyangan Dimension (Harmony with God)

This dimension measures the students' level of awareness of spirituality, morality, and divine values in the learning process. The results show a very high perception level with a mean score of 4.31 (86.2%), suggesting that students highly internalize the importance of spiritual balance in sustainable economics.

**Table 4.** Students' Perception of *Parahyangan* Indicators

| No      | Indicator                                                                       | Mean | (%)  | Category  |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-----------|
| 1       | Economic decisions should reflect moral and ethical values.                     | 4.35 | 87.0 | Very High |
| 2       | Learning economics should promote honesty and integrity.                        | 4.32 | 86.4 | Very High |
| 3       | Spiritual reflection helps students understand the ethical impact of economics. | 4.28 | 85.6 | Very High |
| Average |                                                                                 | 4.31 | 86.2 | Very High |

Students believe that moral and spiritual aspects play a central role in shaping responsible economic behavior. Integrating *Parahyangan* encourages students to make economic decisions that are not solely profit-oriented but grounded in ethical and spiritual awareness.

### 2. Pawongan Dimension (Harmony among Humans)

The *Pawongan* dimension reflects students' appreciation for cooperation, empathy, and social justice in economic contexts. The mean score of 4.25 (85%) shows a very high perception level, emphasizing the importance of human relationships in sustaining balanced economic systems.

**Table 5.** Students' Perception of *Pawongan* Indicators.

| No      | Indicator                                                                      | Mean | (%)  | Category  |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-----------|
| 1       | Learning economics should encourage cooperation and mutual respect.            | 4.30 | 86.0 | Very High |
| 2       | Economic education must emphasize fairness and equality in social interaction. | 4.22 | 84.4 | Very High |
| 3       | Collaboration in group learning reflects social ethics in economic practice.   | 4.23 | 84.6 | Very High |
| Average |                                                                                | 4.25 | 85.0 | Very High |

Students recognize that cooperation and empathy are essential components of sustainable economic education. The *Pawongan* values

encourage collective responsibility and fairness, aligning with the social sustainability dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### 3. *Palemahan Dimension (Harmony with Nature)*

This dimension evaluates students' environmental concern and awareness of resource sustainability

within economic learning. The *Palemahan* dimension achieved a mean score of 4.18 (83.6%), categorized as high.

**Table 6.** Students' Perception of *Palemahan* Indicators

| No      | Indicator                                                              | Mean | (%)  | Category |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|----------|
| 1       | Learning economics should include environmental conservation topics.   | 4.20 | 84.0 | High     |
| 2       | Students must understand the ecological impact of economic activities. | 4.16 | 83.2 | High     |
| 3       | Sustainable resource management is essential for economic stability.   | 4.18 | 83.6 | High     |
| Average |                                                                        | 4.18 | 83.6 | High     |

Students display strong environmental concern and acknowledge the necessity of integrating sustainability into economic education. The *Palemahan* values reinforce awareness of the interdependence between the economy and the ecosystem, aligning with SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

The overall analysis reveals that students from the Economics Education Study Program at Undiksha exhibit a high to very high perception toward the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* principles into sustainable economic education. The results demonstrate that cultural values, when embedded into educational practices, can effectively nurture ethical, socially responsible, and environmentally conscious learners.

### Discussion

The present study demonstrates that students in the Economics Education program at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha hold predominantly positive perceptions toward integrating *Tri Hita Karana* values into economic learning. The highest scores in *Parahyangan* ( $M = 4.31$ , 86.2%) and *Pawongan* ( $M = 4.25$ , 85.0%) indicate strong acceptance of spiritual-ethical and social-ethical dimensions, while *Palemahan* ( $M = 4.18$ , 83.6%), although slightly lower-still reflects a robust environmental awareness. Collectively, the composite score ( $M = 4.25$ , 85%) suggests that embedding local philosophical wisdom can meaningfully support the aims of sustainable economic education, by fostering moral orientation, social responsibility, and ecological concern among future educators.

These results align with the principles of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD),

which seek not only cognitive knowledge but also the affective and behavioral competencies needed for sustainability (Luong, 2025; Tallgauer & Schank, 2023; UNESCO, 2020). By promoting spiritual reflection (*Parahyangan*), collaborative ethics (*Pawongan*), and environmental stewardship (*Palemahan*), the *Tri Hita Karana* framework operationalizes ESD competencies and directly supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) through cultivating sustainability literacy and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) by reinforcing ecological values and resource consciousness.

The study's outcomes are consistent with recent literature that argues for a shift from narrowly technical economics education toward holistic, value-based approaches. For example, research advocating rethought economics curricula emphasizes integrating ethical and ecological concerns into economics teaching (Chindarkar & Thampapillai, 2018; Kardoyo et al., 2024). Empirical studies on embedding sustainability into higher education curricula report similar increases in student awareness and pro-environmental attitudes (Al Husban, 2025; Balcerak & Woźniak, 2022; Farliana et al., 2024; Prabawati et al., 2025). Local-wisdom studies, further corroborate that cultural philosophies provide practical levers for promoting environmental stewardship and social harmony in community and institutional contexts. Thus, the present findings extend this body of work by demonstrating that *Tri Hita Karana* can be effectively perceived by economics students as a pedagogical resource that translates abstract sustainability aims into culturally resonant learning goals.

The strong student endorsement for *Parahyangan* and *Pawongan* suggests that curriculum designers should explicitly integrate value-based modules such as ethics in economic decision-making, service-learning, and reflective practices into core economics courses. Meanwhile, the slightly lower (but still high) score for *Palemahan* indicates an opportunity to strengthen experiential and applied components (e.g., community ecological projects, fieldwork, case studies on circular economy practices) to deepen ecological competencies. Embedding *Tri Hita Karana* across learning outcomes, assessments, and co-curricular activities will help produce graduates equipped to navigate trade-offs among economic, social, and environmental objectives.

### Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study relies on purposive sampling of 100 students from a single institution, which may limit generalizability. Self-reported perceptions could also be subject to social desirability bias. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to track whether positive perceptions translate into sustained behavioral change and professional practice. Comparative studies across multiple universities and disciplinary contexts (e.g., business, agriculture) would clarify the transferability of *Tri Hita Karana* as a pedagogical model. Finally, mixed-methods research combining surveys with interviews, classroom observations, and assessment of learning outcomes would provide a richer picture of how local wisdom is operationalized and internalized.

### Conclusions

This study affirms that the implementation of *Tri Hita Karana* values in sustainable economic education contributes significantly to the development of students' spiritual, social, and ecological awareness. The findings reveal that students of the Economics Education Study Program at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha (Undiksha) hold highly positive perceptions toward the integration of *Tri Hita Karana*

principles within the learning process. The *Parahyangan* dimension achieved the highest score, reflecting strong spiritual awareness and moral responsibility. The *Pawongan* dimension demonstrates ethical attitudes, empathy, and social cooperation, while the *Palemahan* dimension indicates students' concern for environmental preservation and resource sustainability.

**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest concerning the publication of this article.

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