

Psychological Well-Being and Climate Change in the Unity of Cosmic Consciousness: A Theo-Cosmological Perspective

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Abstract. Cosmic consciousness is an idea about the interrelationship between the macrocosm (universe) and microcosm (human) which is immaterial and spiritual. Indonesian people with Hindu beliefs in the Vedas use cosmic consciousness to predict seasonal changes and natural phenomena. Cosmic consciousness has an implicit element of environmental mastery. As one of the dimensions of psychological well-being, it is worth investigating its relationship with cosmic consciousness in an effort to respond to climate change. This research uses a literature review on Hindu cosmology, psychological well-being, and climate change studies in Indonesia. The findings show that human behavior towards nature and prejudice towards God affect climate change in the context of cosmic consciousness. Thus, this research can generate new values between local wisdom and global issues related to climate change.

Keywords: Psychological well-being, cosmic consciousness, climate change

1 Introduction

Climate change is a real threat to human life today, the effects and concerns of climate change today, and in the future will increase [1]. Climate change is a change in climate patterns within a span of dozens or even hundreds of years. Climate change can have a direct impact in the form of heat waves, floods, and droughts, while the indirect impact is in the form of impaired human health due to air pollution, disease, malnutrition and mental health [2]. Evidence of climate change includes: sea levels are rising, glaciers are shrinking, rainfall patterns are changing, and the world is getting warmer. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) [3] current levels of greenhouse gas emissions are likely to cause average temperatures to rise by 0.2°C per decade, reaching a threshold of 2°C above 2050. Recent evidence suggests even more rapid climate change which can be detrimental to the lives of not only humans but also species and ecosystems [4]. More specifically, Indonesia is also experiencing climate change, which can be seen from indications of an increase in the number of hot days during the day and a decrease in the number of cold days at night in 2019 and 2020 according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) [5]. This shows that there has been a rise in global

temperature in Indonesia. Given that climate change can affect human life, there is an idea of cosmic consciousness which is described as a higher form of consciousness than that possessed by ordinary humans or described as a mystical experience of a person.

Unlike normal consciousness, cosmic consciousness is not limited to objects; both dissolve in unity so as to provide an experience of all God's creations as well as a direct perception of the cosmos, which is defined by a sense of unity and unification [6]. It turns out that the Vedas also explain cosmic consciousness, where they discuss the mutually influential relationship between the macrocosm (universe) and microcosm (humans) [7]. In the context of climate change, cosmic consciousness has been discussed and used by Indonesian people with Hindu beliefs to predict seasonal changes and other natural phenomena. Based on the Hiranyagarbha theory, the creation of the macrocosm was initiated by God's realization that before this universe existed, he existed as an astaprakriti element, which is eight immense elements without size (tanmatra) in Hiranyagarbha. The eight great elements are budhi (intellect), manas (mind/consciousness), ahamkara (ego), akasha (ether), bayu (air), teja (fire), apah (water), and prithivi (earth), all in the Universal Storehouse called Hiranyagarbha. After the macrocosm was created, God created humans with the same elements as the macrocosm, then called the microcosm. Thus, in this universe according to the Vedas there are three consciousnesses that synergize, namely God's consciousness, macrocosm, and humans as microcosm. So that indirectly human consciousness has a cosmic effect. Because all existence in the world is a complexity of universal systems that affect each other, and all natural phenomena including climate change, are a reflection of how humans treat nature or each other as creature [8].

Given that, humans also play a role in climate change that occurs, as in the previous explanation as microcosmic creatures, it is indirectly necessary to master the environment to achieve cosmic awareness in the context of climate change. This is in accordance with the theory of psychological well-being, where environmental mastery is one of its dimensions. According to Ryff & Keyes, it is explained as follows: (1) autonomy; (2) positive relationships with others; (3) environmental mastery; (4) personal growth; (5) life purpose; and (6) self-acceptance [9]. Psychological well-being itself is defined as a subjective evaluation of one's own life that includes various positive things in oneself and the environment [10].

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between psychological well-being and climate change in the unity of cosmic consciousness through a literature review on Hindu cosmology on the creation, maintenance, and dissolution and re-creation of the universe. So that after knowing how the relationship between psychological well-being on climate change in the unity of cosmic consciousness is expected to arise, good behavior towards fellow living things As Bhagavadgita states; "*The customs of the great will be followed by others*" (Bhagavadgita III.21); "*Those who are intellectual or wise should not confuse the common people*" (Bhagavadgita III.26).

2 Methods

This research uses a literature review on Hindu cosmology, psychological well-being, and climate change studies in Indonesia. These studies are analyzed to determine the relationship between psychological well-being and climate change in the unity of cosmic consciousness and

its application and response to natural events that are returned to the reflection of humans as microcosmic beings.

3 Discussion

3.1 Climate change in Indonesia and Hindu cosmic consciousness

Given that climate change is a global problem throughout the world, including in Indonesia, this is an urgency to answer and address what attitudes should be taken, before that climate change has appeared in Indonesia with some evidence, namely the reduction of rainfall observed from 1981 to 2020 by BMKG with an indication that the more blue the area is getting wetter, while the more red the area or place will be drier. Based on the observations by BMKG, the Indonesian region shows a tendency to get drier.

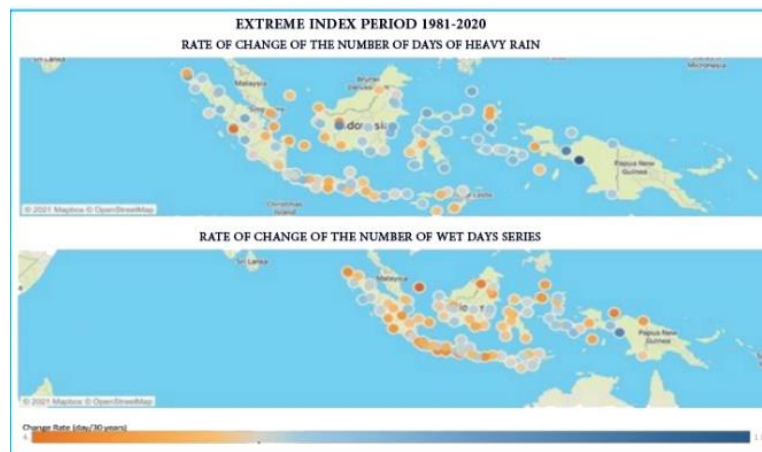


Fig. 1. The rate of change in the number of heavy rainy days and the rate of change in the number of wet day series for the period 1981-2020 [11]

Reports of global temperature increases in Indonesia in 2019, 2020 and 2023 are also an indication of climate change in Indonesia obtained from World Meteorological Organization (WMO) data. Most of the annual TXmean increases also occur in the annual minimum average temperature. Annual changes in TX90p (warm days) and TN90p (warm nights) have increased in most regions in Indonesia. This means that during the observation, these areas experienced an increase in temperature and an increasing number of hot days that occurred during the day and night. Temperature increase is influenced by several causes, one of which is lifestyle, consumption patterns and irregular population growth, coupled with various human activities that damage the environment. The impact of rising temperatures also causes disruption of agricultural yields, besides making viruses and bacteria stronger and faster to multiply, and can cause new types of diseases [12].

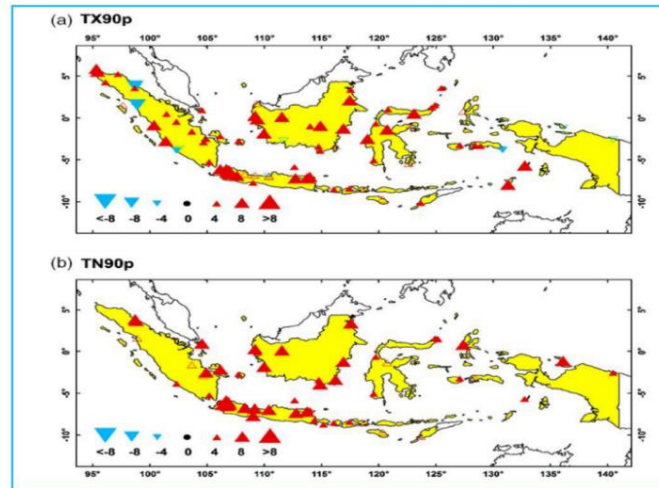


Fig. 2. Trend of increasing extreme indices TX90p (warm days) and TN90p (warm nights) in Indonesia [13]

Another indication of climate change in Indonesia is the increase in sea level influenced by melting snow thickness or cover at the top of Jaya Wijaya observed from 1964 to 2018 is also one indication of climate change being a problem for the people of Indonesia. The increase in sea level certainly raises the vulnerability of inundation of some parts of coastal areas that have low land elevation. This of course can be detrimental to the activities of existing coastal communities, besides the impact of sea level rise including increasing the frequency and intensity of flooding, changes in ocean currents, widespread mangrove damage and widespread threats to the socio-economic activities of coastal communities [14].

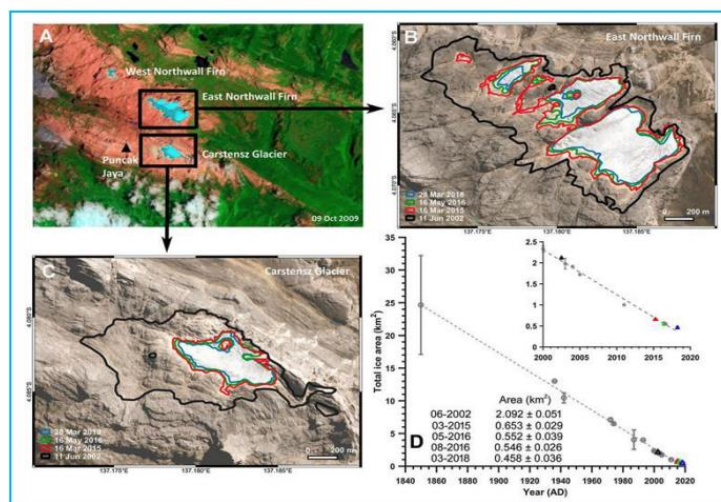


Fig. 3. Changes in total ice extent and impacts of El Niño 2015-2016 on Papua glaciers

As a result of climate change, it is necessary to correct or reflect on every human being, especially the Indonesian people, on how to address matters related to climate change, then the idea of cosmic consciousness according to Hinduism becomes one of the alternatives to be able to address this. The explanation of cosmic consciousness is discussed in Vedic historical-theocosmology through the theory of mahat, which means mind or universal consciousness. As described in Hindu cosmology, cosmic consciousness guards every atom of the universe, including the atoms of human brain cells. Therefore, the consciousness that controls the mind of the macrocosm and microcosm is the same, namely God's consciousness, therefore in Hindu creation theory, explaining that humans as microcosmic creatures are a system of macrocosmic creation series, the term "*yad bhavam tad bhavati*" is known with the meaning that what is desired and even thought of will happen. So that the role of cosmic consciousness according to Veda is indirectly a process of contemplation for humanity to be prejudiced and do good and take care of nature in order to anticipate or respond to climate change with all its impacts [15].

3.2 Human role in vedic cosmic consciousness of climate change

The view that humans are one of the important elements in influencing climate is because in the unity of cosmic consciousness, all is a reflection of the actions and behavior of humans themselves, to the universe and their prejudices towards God, because giving the role of humans as the power of nature itself [16].

Nature itself provides enough for humans to continue their lives. With human awareness, nature is maintained and processed to help sustain life, such as clothing, food and shelter. Therefore, the synergy of God as the creator of humans and the universe plays an active role in the life of the world, as a concept in religion, a vertical communicative relationship as a form of gratitude from humans. Itself quoted from the book Sarasmuccaya sloka 2 "*Among all living things, only those who are born into humans can do good or bad deeds*" [17].

So from this explanation, the role of humans in climate change is as a balancer of nature itself based on good and bad behavior as a human life choice, as well as an effort to contemplate climate change and the impacts felt today [18]. The relationship between humans and the universe is built on the awareness to respect and balance each other, both biotic and abiotic. In the context of cosmic consciousness, humans as one of its components must master the surrounding environment, be open and care about the universe or macrocosm, considering that all are God's creations that synergize and mirror each other in the unity of Veda cosmic consciousness [19].

3.3 Psychological well-being and climate change in cosmic consciousness

The phenomenon of climate change can be studied through a psychological perspective, namely psychological well-being with the understanding of conditions where individuals accept themselves and their past, regulate the environment according to their needs, try to develop their potential, and make their lives more meaningful [20]. In psychological well-being Ryff explains there are six dimensions as follows: (1) autonomy; (2) positive relationships with others; (3) environmental mastery; (4) personal growth; (5) life goals; and (6) self-acceptance. Environmental mastery in this dimension of psychological well-being is one of the important things related to climate change in the concept of Hindu cosmic consciousness because, if

humans can master their environment both biotically and abiotically, they indirectly understand their portion and position as microcosmic beings [21].

Cosmic consciousness according to Hinduism in the section on the origin and creation of the universe is explained that God exists in every element of life *"Know, O Partha, I am the eternal seed of all beings, I am the mind of the intellectual, I am the brilliant ray of light"* (Bhagavadgita VII. 10). So that indirectly implies the meaning that both the macrocosm and microcosm are united in the part of God, but humans or individuals with noble souls who carry out virtues in this world by respecting all creatures both biotic and abiotic and knowing their portions will know God is in that part of the human being as well as being a reflection of what the macrocosm is to the microcosm. *"But, one who is noble in spirit and devotional in nature, knowing Me as indestructible, as the source of all beings, O Partha, worships-Me with concentrated mind and consciousness"* (Bhagavadgita IX. 13) [22].

In the context of climate change, environmental mastery is the ability to manage the environment effectively, to be able to utilize opportunities positively to develop themselves or improve their abilities. Specifically, environmental mastery on climate change in the unity of cosmic consciousness can be done by caring for trees around, not throwing garbage in the river, maintaining water sources by not polluting them with inorganic waste, etc [23]. This is the basis as well as the fundamental of how humans achieve psychological well-being or self-being when the surrounding environment is biotically and abiotically supportive, thus requiring mastery of the environment and realizing that climate change and its impacts are natural things that occur, as well as being a question and reflection on whether as humans or microcosmic creatures have prejudged God and behaved well with the surrounding nature in the context of cosmic consciousness [24]. In the concept of Vedic cosmic consciousness, the theory of mahat has explained that there are three harmonies between God, the universe and humans, so that in simple terms what humans think or do as microcosmic beings will affect the macrocosm or nature itself, and become a reflection of each element in Vedic cosmic consciousness in the theory of mahat itself.

4 Conclusion

The explanation of psychological well-being and climate change in the unity of cosmic consciousness shows that cosmic consciousness according to Hindu beliefs can be a valuable source of knowledge on how adherents understand and respond to the impacts of climate change, where it is discussed in the theory of mahat that there are three harmonies between God, the universe (macrocosm) and humans (microcosm). Improving relationships biotically with fellow humans and other living things, as well as abiotically such as rivers, seas, land, and mountains is contained in this discussion of cosmic consciousness. Knowledge of cosmic consciousness according to Hinduism is one of the alternative answers in responding to climate change, then environmental mastery in the psychological well-being dimension plays a role in improving the relationship between humans and all the good potential that has existed in each individual since birth, towards the universe and God as the creator by behaving and prejudging God and all His creations.

5 Contribution to the frame of knowledge

This research can produce new values between local wisdom about cosmic awareness according to Hinduism combined with academic science, that Indonesia has a way to respond to large-scale events, namely climate change with very simple values, namely always behaving well to fellow God's creations and being prejudiced to God as the creator.

6 Implications of the knowledge

Its relevance for every individual, both academics and practitioners, in an effort to respond to climate change and its impact on psychological well-being, requires knowledge of cosmic awareness, with simple concrete efforts, namely always prejudging everyone, using natural resources as needed, throwing garbage in its place, living according to needs and most importantly always prejudging God as the creator, because climate change is a mirror of how humans treat and view the universe. This will help each individual to respond and reduce the fear and impact of climate change.

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