

Ethical Discourse of Responsibility in The Covid19 Pandemic Humanitarian Disaster

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Abstract: *This article aims to elaborate on how Emmanuel Levinas' discourse on the ethics of responsibility applies to the humanitarian crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Levinas offers a concrete ethical concept for addressing humanitarian issues, distinguishing himself from earlier ethical philosophy experts. The research method employed is qualitative, utilizing a literature review approach. The findings and discussion reveal that Levinas' perspective on the ethics of responsibility emphasizes concrete responsibility in encounters with the 'Face of the Other'. Furthermore, responsibility represents a form of human identity from a humanitarian perspective when facing the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Levinas, unconditional responsibility is not something we receive or a rule we agree to bind ourselves to, but rather something that exists before we make any decisions. Unconsciously, we already have unlimited responsibility towards others. The conclusion drawn is that adhering to health protocols is a concrete manifestation of Levinas' ethics of responsibility in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as it is oriented towards the safety of others. Levinas' ethics of responsibility is asymmetrical. The ethical discourse on responsibility discussed in this study is limited to the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, thus it has limitations in broader explanations. Although Levinas' grand ideas may not suffice to solve all the ethical issues we face, their strength lies in reminding us of the inherent nature of ethical demands that should underpin all moral theories. Levinas invites us to reconsider the essence of ethical responsibility, which transcends formal rules and agreements, towards a deeper understanding of our relationships with others.*

Keywords: Ethics; Responsibility; Covid-19 Pandemic

A. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic is no longer talked about by many people as it was in the beginning. In fact, the news on social media or television is no longer there. Nonetheless, the event has significantly affected the behavior of human life and is felt to this day. For example, in an economic context, people prefer to shop online compared to when the pandemic had not yet hit all countries around the world. This is in line with a report from McKinsey which shows that during the pandemic, e-commerce in America has grown by almost 30%.¹ This shift in social behavior is a form of human adaptation, in the face of a new and very tense atmosphere for the survival of their lives.²

However, the new habitus or habit resulting from the adaptation process in dealing with the pandemic that has ended, brings challenges that are quite troublesome to handle. Among them is the increased use of digital technology with the spread of false information or hoaxes. Data from the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo) shows that during the Covid-19 pandemic, there have been 1,028 hoaxes related to the virus

¹ Camilo Becdach et al., "Rapidly Forecasting Demand and Adapting Commercial Plans in a Pandemic," McKinsey & Company, April 2020, 3.

² Angelina Kuncoro et al., "Perubahan Perilaku Pengunjung Pasca Pandemi Covid-19 Terhadap Desain Interior Cafe," vol. 3, 2021, 22-28.

spread across social media.³ The proliferation of false information not only hampers efforts to deal with and control the pandemic, but also creates confusion and distrust in the community. The spread of hoaxes not only causes unrest in the community but can also have quite fatal consequences. One clear example of the negative impact of hoaxes is the Covid-19 vaccination which is ineffective or contains harmful ingredients,⁴ and forbidden by religion. These claims of information dissemination have made many people afraid and reluctant to vaccinate, which in turn increases the risk of spikes in viral infections and the potential for serious complications, even death.⁵

Situations such as the cases described demand the importance of applying ethics in the use of information tools and social media. Users and beneficiaries of the development of information technology must be responsible in filtering and verifying information, before spreading it. The ethics of responsibility plays an important role in overcoming the humanitarian crisis caused by the covid 19 pandemic, in suppressing the rate of spread of the virus.⁶

The theme of ethics has been written by many researchers, including J. Sudarminta. In his article entitled "Moral Judgment Benchmarks in John Dewey's Pragmatic Ethics", *DISKURSUS Journal of Philosophy and Theology*, Sudarminta explains that according to Dewey, human morality is judged based on actions that support his life goals.⁷ Dewey emphasizes that actions that benefit human survival have high moral value. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, complying with health protocols, such as washing hands regularly and wearing masks, are examples of actions that support the goal of human life by reducing the risk of spreading the virus. These actions are not only beneficial individually, but also for society in general, so they have significant moral value. Therefore, complying with health protocols in Dewey's perspective can be considered as part of the application of pragmatism ethics.

In contrast to John Dewey's pragmatism view, Emmanuel Levinas emphasizes that ethics is a concrete action that does not demand reciprocity for human existence. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, we face various choices of action: ignoring those infected, pretending to care by expressing concern through social media without any real action, or truly showing concern by volunteering in an anti-Covid-19 task force. According to Levinas, true ethics only happens through a direct encounter with the face of the 'Other', which makes the ethical act concrete and meaningful.⁸

Kosmas Sobon, in his article entitled "The Concept of Responsibility in the Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas" published in the *Journal of Philosophy*, states that for Levinas, the

³ PDSI KOMINFO, "Kominfo Mencatat Sebanyak 1.028 Hoaks Tersebar terkait COVID-19," Website Resmi Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika RI, accessed June 12, 2024, http://content/detail/28536/kominfo-mencatat-sebanyak-1028-hoaks-tersebar-terkait-covid-19/0/sorotan_media.

⁴ Rochani Nani Rahayu, "Vaksin Covid 19 Di Indonesia: Analisis Berita Hoax," *Jurnal Ekonomi, Sosial & Humaniora* 2, no. 07 (2021): 39-49.

⁵ Dedi Junaedi et al., "Menguji Efektivitas Vaksinasi Covid-19 di Indonesia," *Reslaj : Religion Education Social Laa Roiba Journal* 4, no. 1 (August 27, 2021): 140, <https://doi.org/10.47467/reslaj.v4i1.537>.

⁶ Tony Salurante et al., "Tanggung Jawab Menjalankan Protokol Kesehatan Di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19 Ditinjau Dari Perspektif Etika Kristen," *VISIO DEI: Jurnal Teologi Kristen* 3, no. 1 (2021): 68.

⁷ J. Sudarminta, "Tolok Ukur Penilaian Moral Dalam Etika Pragmatik John Dewey," *DISKURSUS. JURNAL FILSAFAT DAN TEOLOGI* 13, no. 2 (2014): 174-92.

⁸ Thomas Hidyia Tjaya, *Enigma Wajah Orang Lain* (Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2012): 89.

ethics of responsibility is an inherent fact in human existence and is concrete and asymmetrical.⁹ In a pandemic situation, being in the face of the 'Other' and acting with responsibility for good without expecting reciprocity reflects the core of Levinas' ethics. This means that actions such as volunteering and helping those directly affected reflect Levinas' essential ethic of responsibility.

Since the Covid-19 virus hit Indonesia from 2019 until now, it has had a significant impact on behavioral changes known as New Normal.¹⁰ Some sectors of social life in the new normal era have resulted in 'alpha' encounters with the face of 'The Other'. For example, in the field of education, teaching and learning activities are carried out online, which creates distance in face-to-face meetings. For Levinas, face is always about the presence of the whole 'other', for us so that our understanding does not experience reduction.¹¹ Facial presence is a symbol of interaction that essentially provides an understanding and appreciation of the other person's existence.

M. Wahyu Pratama Putra and Kurnia Sari Kasmirano in their article on "The Effect of Covid-19 on Community Life in Indonesia: Education, Economy, and Spiritual Religious Sectors", POROS ONIM; Journal of Social Religion, revealed that the online learning process was ineffective..¹² Although in the economic field and religious activities are increasingly creative, with the use of social media, this situation is not accompanied by a significant impact on increasing income and deepening religious spirituality.¹³

Some of the above literature is very useful in the preparation of this article. The first article, written by J. Sudarminta, focuses only on John Dewey's pragmatic ethical theory, so the concept of ethics is very theoretical. This contrasts with the view of Emmanuel Levinas, who emphasizes that ethics is a concrete action manifested in a direct encounter with the Face of the 'Other'. The second article, written by Kosmos Sobon, although successfully outlines the background and nature of responsibility according to Levinas, still focuses on the metaphysical aspects of ethics. Meanwhile, the third article, written by M. Wahyu Pratama Putra and Kurnia Sari Kasmirano, is limited to describing the changes in people's behavior from offline to online in the sectors of education, economy, and religious activities, without deeply discussing the implications.

This article seeks to re-reflect the ethics of responsibility in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic. With this background, the important issue raised in the paper is how the concrete actions of Emmanuel Levinas' ethics of responsibility manifest in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic humanitarian disaster. This includes how direct encounters with others in pandemic conditions can be translated into concrete actions that reflect responsibility without expecting reciprocity, in accordance with Levinas' ethical principles.

⁹ Kosmas Sobon, "Konsep Tanggung Jawab Dalam Filsafat Emmanuel Levinas," *Jurnal Filsafat* 28, no. 1 (2018): 47-73.

¹⁰ Wahyudin Darmalaksana, "New Normal Perspektif Sunnah Nabi Saw.," *Fakultas Ushuluddin UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung* 1 (2020).

¹¹ Tjaya, *Enigma Wajah Orang Lain*: 93.

¹² M Wahyu Pratama Putra and Kurnia Sari Kasmiarno, "Pengaruh Covid-19 Terhadap Kehidupan Masyarakat Indonesia: Sektor Pendidikan, Ekonomi Dan Spiritual Keagamaan," *POROS ONIM: Jurnal Sosial Keagamaan* 1, no. 2 (2020): 144-59.

¹³ Putra and Kasmiarno.

The purpose of this paper is to understand the form of responsibility that Emmanuel Levinas envisions. For Levinas, responsibility towards the face of the 'Other' is a fundamental subjective structure in human relations. This ethic of responsibility is not derived from the concept of intentionality in Husserl's Phenomenology or from the concept of freedom in Sartre's philosophy of existentialism. By knowing the nature of Levinas' ethics of responsibility, this article is expected to contribute a new perspective that enriches the treasures of philosophy, especially in understanding Emmanuel Levinas' thoughts on ethics and responsibility.

B. Methods

The type of research applied in writing this article is qualitative research. Where the research process can be done by literature study without going directly to the field.¹⁴ The approach taken is phenomenology. The phenomenological approach is to explain something that already exists "what is given" about a phenomenon that appears in consciousness without trying to explain it in any way.¹⁵ This research was conducted to obtain an overview of how Emmanuel Levinas' ethical concept of responsibility in dealing with humanitarian disasters such as the Covid-19 pandemic is concrete. The data collected to describe Emmanuel Levinas' thoughts on the concept of ethics and responsibility through primary and secondary sources. Primary data sources are sources of first-hand data.¹⁶ For primary data sources, researchers used Levinas' book entitled "Ethics and Infinity". Meanwhile, secondary data sources are sourcing whose data are related to the theme of Levinas' ethics of responsibility. The sources of information traced in the writing of this article are in the form of texts of articles related to the covid-19 pandemic humanitarian disaster and Emmanuel Levinas' thoughts on the ethics of responsibility. The data collection process is carried out with a text study approach or literature study.¹⁷ The content analysis in the discussion of this article is carried out using logical, inductive, and deductive reasoning, which is presented descriptively.¹⁸

Husserl's phenomenology has greatly influenced Emmanuel Levinas' thinking. However, he also criticized it for its theoretical tendencies.¹⁹ The phenomenological approach dwells on two things, first, all human experiences that are expressive of subjective individual consciousness. Second, all consciousness is awareness of something that substantially always has a subject and object.²⁰ The relevance of the phenomenological approach in this research is because the ethics of responsibility is a concrete expressive form of human action. The obstacle in using this approach is the phenomenon of the Covid-19 pandemic that has passed. Thus, phenomenology in this article is not in the discourse of direct experience observed by researchers, but through text observation of events that have already occurred.

¹⁴ Arip Budiman and Putri Anditasari, "Spiritualitas Agama Bagi Bencana Kemanusiaan Dalam Filsafat Perennial: Tinjauan Pemikiran Filsafat Seyyed Hossein Nasr," *Jaqfi: Jurnal Aqidah Dan Filsafat Islam* 6, no. 2 (2021): 112-24.

¹⁵ Gusmira Wita and Irhas Fansuri Mursal, "Fenomenologi dalam Kajian Sosial Sebuah Studi Tentang Konstruksi Makna," *Titian: Jurnal Ilmu Humaniora* 6, no. 2 (December 8, 2022): 327, <https://doi.org/10.22437/titian.v6i2.21211>.

¹⁶ Surakhmad and Winarno, *Penelitian Ilmiah, Dasar, Metode, Teknik* (Bandung: Tarsito, 1982), 134.

¹⁷ Monique Hennink, Inge Hutter, and Ajay Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods* (Sage, 2020).

¹⁸ Darmalaksana, "New Normal Perspektif Sunnah Nabi Saw."

¹⁹ Emmanuel Lévinas and Philippe Nemo, *Ethics and Infinity*, 1985.

²⁰ Heddy Shri Ahimsa-Putra, "Pendekatan Fenomenologi untuk Memahami Agama" 20 (2012): 276.

C. Result dan Discussion

Ethics as a branch of philosophy

Ethics is one of the oldest branches of philosophy that focuses on what is good and bad in terms of the moral principles of human behavior. This discipline aims to discuss how should a human being act? What makes an action good or bad? And what kind of action should we take in a covid 19 pandemic situation? Ethics as a branch of philosophy has an important role as a moral rule that emphasizes individuals or groups to act and understand the very basic principles of morality.

In the discourse of ethics, there is also a discussion about subjectivity and objectivity in morality. Some philosophers who are concerned with ethical issues, are of the view that morality is a subjective thing, depending on individual views based on the moral system and culture that surrounds them. However, some other philosophers view that morality is also objective, depending on the objectivity of facts that have universal value principles.²¹ For example, there is a moral principle that killing a human being is a bad act. Everyone, no matter where they live will agree on that. This is what is meant by universal and objective morality ethics.

Before going further into the discussion of ethics as a branch of philosophy, etymologically the term 'ethics' comes from Ancient Greek, namely ethos. In the singular, the word ethos has the meaning of the usual place of residence, such as pasture, habits, customs, morals, feelings, attitudes, and ways of thinking. While in the plural, the word has the meaning of customs and habits.²² Ethics tries to discuss customs, the good and bad deeds done by human beings. It is in this latter sense that ethics became a theme in the philosophical discussions raised by Plato and Aristotle.²³

Humans basically have the goal of life to obtain happiness. For Plato, happiness is obtained by humans through the activities of their intellect in gaining knowledge.²⁴ And thus, he then explained that the human mind used to gain knowledge has two parts; philosophical mind and ordinary mind. Plato also revealed that good ethics for a person is ethics that comes from philosophical intellect, not from someone who is controlled by desires and passions that come from ordinary intellect.²⁵ Meanwhile, according to Aristotle, moral goodness is a human happiness in realizing and achieving the highest wisdom, which comes from the ratio or reason.²⁶

Looking at what Plato and Aristotle have said about ethics, they seem to have something in common, which is that they both originate from reason or ratio. This means that the study of ethics is philosophically grounded because it is something very rational and logical. Ethics is a marker that distinguishes the definition of a human being from other animals, apart from the aspect of thinking ability. Because only humans have a principle of morality that is not found in other creatures. In animals, there is no awareness of good and

²¹ Totok Wahyu Abadi, "Aksiologi: Antara Etika, Moral, Dan Estetika," *KANAL: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 4, no. 2 (2016): 187-204.

²² Kees Bertens, *Etika K. Bertens*, vol. 21 (Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1993): 4-5.

²³ Muhammad Taufik, "Etika Plato Dan Aristoteles: Dalam Perspektif Etika Islam," *Refleksi: Jurnal Filsafat Dan Pemikiran Islam* 18, no. 1 (2018): 27-45.

²⁴ Taufik, "Etika Plato Dan Aristoteles: Dalam Perspektif Etika Islam.", 27-45

²⁵ Taufik. Taufik, "Etika Plato Dan Aristoteles: Dalam Perspektif Etika Islam.", 27-45

²⁶ Taufik. Taufik, "Etika Plato Dan Aristoteles: Dalam Perspektif Etika Islam.", 27-45

bad, of what is forbidden and permissible, of what is appropriate and inappropriate for humans to do..²⁷

Etika Tanggung Jawab Emmanuel Levinas

Freedom and responsibility are inseparable. Because the meaning of responsibility itself is directed to a law of causality. If there is freedom, there is responsibility. To borrow K. Bertens' phrase, "in responsibility lies the notion of cause'. A person is responsible for something that is caused by him".²⁸ He went on to say that the condition for responsibility is not just that there is a cause, but that there needs to be a cause for people to be free. For him, freedom is a necessary condition for responsibility.²⁹

Emmanuel Levinas' thinking departs from his idea of a concrete encounter with the 'face' of another person, as the basis for revealing awareness and self-identity in social relations. According to Levinas, philosophy in the context of ethics should not ignore the idea of 'the other' or the other that has been alpha in modern discourse, but this 'other' must be understood as an ethical requirement for human freedom in existence. Thus, when we encounter other people, before we respond to them as in the form of greeting, we are already in relation to them.³⁰

Speaking of freedom, Western philosophy is familiar with the famous figure of Jean Paul Sartre. He is one of the most extreme figures in existentialism philosophy because he believes that freedom is the destiny of a human being. However, his expression is quite paradoxical, because the freedom possessed by a person is limited by the presence of others. Sartre once said that "others are hell" for a subject's freedom.³¹ The presence of others seems to Sartre to make people not free, which results in a feeling of anxiety about the gaze of the other, not free, worried, feeling watched, especially the impact of judgment and views on the subject who should be free. The implication is that the relationship between subjects and other humans is always considered unfavorable, not unlike a hell that is quite frightening.

Meanwhile, for Levinas, the presence of others is also referred to as the embodiment of the face of 'The Other'.³² The presence of others is not seen as a hell for him. This view is the result of his criticism of Western philosophy which tends to be egoistic, because it views others by starting from the ego as the center. So that in seeing the other, starting from the I and returning to the 'I am'.³³ Emmanuel Levinas referred to Western philosophy as ecology.³⁴ Because it is characterized by the totality of his ego in seeing the other. This Cartesian style of thinking can be found in Descartes' phrase *cogito ergo sum*; 'I think, and I exist'. Consequently, the encounter with the other is seen as existing only because of and for self-consciousness.³⁵ Levinas' ethics of responsibility is a form of criticism of the Western

²⁷ Bertens, *Etika K. Bertens*, vol. 21, 9-10 .

²⁸ Bertens. *Etika K. Bertens*, vol. 21, 9-10

²⁹ Bertens. *Etika K. Bertens*, vol. 21, 9-10

³⁰ Editha Soebagio, "Menyikap Akar Kekerasan dalam Relasi Antarmanusia dan Etika Tanggungjawab Menurut Emmanuel Levinas" 30 (2020): 138.

³¹ Augustinus Setyo Wibowo, "Filsafat Eksistensialisme Jean-Paul Sartre.," 2011.

³² Tjaya, *Enigma Wajah Orang Lain*.

³³ Yogie Pranowo, "Transendensi Dalam Pemikiran Simone de Beauvoir Dan Emmanuel Levinas," *Melintas* 32, no. 1 (2016): 73-93.

³⁴ Kosmas Sobon, "Konsep Tanggung Jawab Dalam Filsafat Emmanuel Levinas," *Jurnal Filsafat* 28, no. 1 (2018): 47-73.

³⁵ Kees Bertens, "Filsafat Barat Kontemporer Prancis, Cet. Ke-IV," *Jakarta: PT Gramedia Utama*, 2006.

philosophical tradition that tends to be totality in viewing the 'Other'.³⁶ This encounter with the Other is an ethical principle for Emmanuel Levinas. Ethics according to Levinas is not a theoretical abstraction, but an existential principle in a concrete encounter with the face of the 'Other'. Something existential cannot be fully explained theoretically.³⁷

From the description above, it can be concluded that what is 'ethical' for Emmanuel Levinas is openness and respect for the otherness of the face of the 'Other'. The self should not be confined in its subjective thinking, but rather point outward to the other person with the fact of existing diversity. An ethical relationship with the Other will only be revealed in an attitude of responsibility during the encounter, by not dominating it, but allowing the Other with its otherness. Responsibility in the face of 'The Other' is only possible if there is no domination from the I towards the other, but rather by showing respect and appreciation for its otherness.³⁸

Ethics in the Covid 19 Pandemic Humanitarian Disaster

The humanitarian disaster of the Covid-19 pandemic has swept the world since the announcement of the virus in late 2019 in Wuhan, China. The pandemic has had a considerable impact on communities around the world, including the deaths of millions of people, the paralysis of economic activities, education and health problems. The situation is quite gripping and forces humans to adapt to new habits, to survive.

With such chaotic conditions, almost everyone did not know what to do. Plus, at the beginning of the Covid-19 virus spread throughout the world, a vaccine to overcome it had not yet been found. The panic experienced by humans is getting worse. In such a situation, ethics becomes very important to be reviewed, reappraised with the developing context, so that it can be practiced relevantly. Some important aspects that make these ethics necessary to be applied in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic are social solidarity, justice, responsibility, trust and transparency, and strengthening the value of empathy between people.

Reviving solidarity is very important, a way for humans to survive in chaotic circumstances and situations due to the Covid-19 pandemic. When the pandemic hit all corners of the world, including Indonesia, everyone became worried, panicked and frantic over the situation. Masks that are usually easily found in shopping centers suddenly disappeared, people hoarded basic staples (food), Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for health workers also became scarce due to irresponsible human actions, with a lack of social solidarity values. If this situation continues, eventually people who fall into the poor category will be directly affected. They may die not because they are infected with covid, but because they are starving and become vulnerable to the virus. Even if masks are available, the price cannot be reached by them.

The Covid-19 pandemic has not only affected the economic crisis but has also affected social solidarity. The moral crisis with actions that take advantage of the disaster situation, has implications for the low solidarity possessed by humans. Social solidarity is a principle that emphasizes the importance of humans to work together and work together in the face of a

³⁶ Jatayu Jiwanda DL, "Konsep Wajah, Tanggung Jawab Etis, Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Problem Kemanusiaan: Suatu Telaah Pemikiran Etika Emmanuel Levinas," *Jurnal Pelita Dharma* 5, no. 2 (2019).

³⁷ Emmanuel Levinas and Philippe Nemo, "Ethics and Infinity," 1985.

³⁸ Tjaya, *Enigma Wajah Orang Lain*.

pandemic. Everyone must help each other and play a role in taking care of others, especially those who are at high risk of being directly affected and who are in dire need of assistance.

Solidarity is a human attitude that always cooperates because it is based on a feeling of mutual support for the life problems they face. This is in line with what was stated by Ritzer, as cited by Funay, that social solidarity is a real form of human behavior in relation to others that gives birth to emotional experiences, thus giving birth to care and strengthening relationships between them.³⁹ Thus, solidarity emphasizes individuals and community groups to support each other in their lives, based on moral values and human values that live in their environment.

Moral and human values that live in society include the principle of justice. Every human being in any condition, especially in a pandemic situation, has the same right to access to a sense of security, health, and social protection guarantees for the situation. This includes everyone's access to vaccines and medicines, as well as financial support for those affected economically. Regrettably, in Indonesia, there is corruption of social assistance funds. In addition, the inaccurate targeting of social assistance is still a sight of how little sense of justice is obtained by the people who are really affected. Policies issued by the government should provide a sense of justice for the community. However, what happens is that policies that should be principled on justice instead only benefit a handful of corrupt officials and harm the small people directly affected by the pandemic.⁴⁰

In addition to a sense of fairness, bringing ethics to life in a pandemic situation based on humanitarian moral values that live in society, is about the importance of having a sense of social responsibility. The application of ethical responsibility in this context is in the form of complying with the rules set by the government and health organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), in the form of, complying with health protocols by wearing masks, diligently washing hands, maintaining a safe distance, and awareness of the importance of vaccination. This is a government effort to protect its people, which must be welcomed by all of us to be protected and avoid the Covid-19 virus.⁴¹

The social responsibility described above will certainly be more alive if trust and transparency are carried out by each stake holder, in providing information. In the early days of the covid pandemic in Indonesia, a lot of information circulated on social media in the form of hoaxes about the number of hospitals that "covid" patients. In addition, there were also various news spread that many people died after being vaccinated. These hoaxes have the effect of shifting people's trust, which leads people away from believing the real facts.⁴²

Ethics in fostering public trust so as not to be trapped in a vortex of fake news that endangers humans because they can be affected by covid, one of which must be transparent in providing information. The basic principle of transparency ethics in this covid-19 pandemic situation is to provide accurate, honest and transparent information. Of course, this must be done by an authoritative institution. This is in the form of (one of them) providing information in terms of reporting the exact number of deaths. This is intended to make the public trust again to check themselves when they are sick during a pandemic. Public trust in

³⁹ Yaspis Edgar N Funay, "Indonesia Dalam Pusaran Masa Pandemi: Strategi Solidaritas Sosial Berbasis Nilai Budaya Lokal," *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama Indonesia (JSAI)* 1, no. 2 (2020): 107-20.

⁴⁰ Anang Dony Irawan, "Pengaruh Pandemi Dalam Menciptakan Ketimpangan Sosial Ekonomi Antara Pejabat Negara Dan Masyarakat," *Jurnal Citizenship Virtues* 2, no. 1 (2022): 251-62.

⁴¹ Salurante et al., "Tanggung Jawab Menjalankan Protokol Kesehatan Di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19 Ditinjau Dari Perspektif Etika Kristen."

⁴² Rahayu, "Vaksin Covid 19 Di Indonesia: Analisis Berita Hoax."

hospitals that they will not be "coveted" is important. Because this can monitor and suppress the spread or transmission of covid-19.

In dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, awareness and ethical actions are needed from every individual and group to help minimize the negative impact of the pandemic on humanity. One of the ethical principles to create such awareness is to revive the value of empathy in society. Ethically, the principle of empathy emphasizes the importance of understanding and feeling the feelings of others, especially those directly affected by the pandemic. This includes our actions in supporting the recovery of people in self-isolation and aiding those in need.⁴³

Thus, in situations and circumstances that are overwhelmed by concerns about the dangers of Covid-19, some examples or actions in applying ethical principles when facing the Covid19 pandemic include: complying with health protocols by maintaining social distance and wearing masks, helping others in need as a form of social solidarity, not forwarding false information or hoaxes, respecting individual rights, increasing empathy and mutual understanding among others.

D. Discussion

Emanuel Levinas has laid down the ethical concept of responsibility for concrete actions through and for others.⁴⁴ Responsibility arises and occurs when we are confronted with another face, a plain one without any other 'frills' that can obscure the vision of humanity. For example, in everyday life we find a neighbor suffering from Covid-19. In terms of identity, the neighbor who is suffering is religiously different from us. In this situation, it is quite a dilemma to help him, because he who is sick is not of the same religion as him. When the neighbor died from the virus, the realization that the one suffering was a human being who also had a family to love, children to be responsible for, came to him. The presence of this awareness comes because the other 'appendages' that surround the neighbor are also dead. Our paradigm of things sometimes obscures our view of humanity. That is what is meant by responsibility arising when we are confronted with the innocent 'face of the other'.

Ethics of Responsibility towards the "Other Face"

According to Nuyen, in the perspective of Levinas' ethics of responsibility, humanitarian responsibility is always present without being commanded by others. Rather, the responsibility comes because I must already be responsible for the appearance of the 'face of the other'. This means that practicing the ethics of responsibility towards others is not a form of command. Rather, it is because human beings themselves are basically unable to avoid that responsibility, and the responsibility in question is our responsibility for the other.⁴⁵ Levinas argues that:

"I understand responsibility as responsibility for others, so like responsibility for what is not my doing, or for what is not even a problem for me; or what is doing a problem for me, is meeting me like a face".⁴⁶

⁴³ AS Enjang et al., "Mendorong Penerapan Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) Untuk Mengatasi Pandemi Covid 19 Di Indonesia," *Mendorong Penerapan Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) Untuk Mengatasi Pandemi Covid 19 Di Indonesia*, 2020.

⁴⁴ Sobon, "Konsep Tanggung Jawab Dalam Filsafat Emmanuel Levinas," 2018.

⁴⁵ AT Nuyen, "Levinas and the Ethics of Pity," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (2000): 414.

⁴⁶ Emmanuel Levinas, "Ethics and Infinity, Translated by Richard A," *Cohen (Pittsburgh: Dusquesne University Press, 1985)*, 1985, 95.

The ethics of responsibility according to Levinas puts the focus on our responsibility to others, especially especially those who are in a state of vulnerability or suffering. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, this means that we have a responsibility to take action to protect ourselves and others from the spread of the covid-19 virus. Some concrete examples of the ethics of responsibility in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, based on Levinas' ethical paradigm are:

1) Wearing a mask

We have a responsibility to protect others from viruses that we may carry, especially when in public places. Wearing a mask is a fairly simple action that can be taken to reduce the risk of spreading the virus to others who are more vulnerable.

2) Maintain social distancing

In a pandemic situation, we also have a responsibility to maintain social distancing, especially from people who are more vulnerable to the virus, such as the elderly or people with congenital diseases that will be more severe if infected with the Covid-19 outbreak.

3) Wash your hands regularly

Washing hands with soap or hand sanitizer regularly, when going to do activities that involve touching is a concrete act of responsibility to prevent the spread of the virus.

4) Avoiding crowds

A concrete form of responsibility ethics that can be done during a pandemic situation is to avoid crowds, especially in rooms with poor ventilation, to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

5) Maintain personal health

We also have the responsibility to take care of our own health, including by complying with health protocols that have been established and provided by local health authorities.

In the face of humanitarian disasters such as the Covid-19 pandemic, Emmanuel Levinas' perspective of responsibility ethics is relevant to be applied. By applying the ethical principle to be responsible for others without cause and reason, we can help reduce the negative impact of the pandemic on humanity and build a society that has social solidarity. A responsible person, according to Levinas as quoted by Kosbon, is a being that is not for itself but is for all.⁴⁷ This means that in the context of responsibility not only for my actions, but I am responsible for the responsibility of others.

The ethical concept of responsibility towards others, for Levinas, does not have to wait for others to act to exercise responsibility towards us. Responsibility is an ethical relation that is asymmetrical.⁴⁸ This means not demanding the same in return for the actions we have done. For example, we voluntarily provide necessities to poor people who are directly affected by the pandemic situation, without expecting anything in return. So, basically Levinas' ethics of responsibility is an act of responsibility that does not demand reciprocity.

In addition to the concrete actions mentioned above, the ethics of responsibility in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic also requires us to consider the impact of our actions on

⁴⁷ Sobon, "Konsep Tanggung Jawab Dalam Filsafat Emmanuel Levinas," 2018.

⁴⁸ Levinas, "Ethics and Infinity, Translated by Richard A," 98.

others. For example, if we want to go outside without wearing a mask, we must consider whether this action is harmful to others. In fact, for ourselves. The ethics of responsibility towards others from Levinas' perspective, in this case, emphasizes the importance of empathy and concern for others. In this case, it means that we must have the awareness to respect the needs and concerns of others, especially for those who are particularly vulnerable to the virus.

The ethics of responsibility in the scope of the covid-19 humanitarian disaster requires us to consider and protect others, respect the needs and concerns of others, and together take action to reduce the risk of spreading the Covid-19 virus. The covid-19 pandemic shows how important Levinas' ethics of responsibility is to be applied in our social lives, and we must continuously practice its principles of responsibility, to help protect the health and safety of all people.

Ethics of Responsibility as Human Identity

Emanuel Levinas asserts that when we confront the face of the other, it reveals an identity of the person. When dealing with others, it will define me as me. For example, in the case above, when we take an act of responsibility to help a neighbor who has contracted Covid-19, even though he is of a different religion, he will find the essence of his solid self as a human being who has principles and will not change his beliefs just because he helps others of a different religion. He will realize that by taking responsibility, no one can take my place or position. Being responsible for others will not make him an apostate. Levinas further writes:

“My responsibility cannot be transferred, no one can replace me. Responsibility is what is properly incumbent upon me, and what, humanly speaking, I cannot refuse. This command constitutes the high dignity of uniqueness. I am me in the primary act that I am responsible for, no one can take my place. I can substitute myself for me. Thus, my identity as a subject is inalienable”.⁴⁹

As a human being who is a servant of God, according to Levinas, the ethic of responsibility must find its concrete form by way of 'my responsibility towards others, and others'.⁵⁰ In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, this concrete responsibility is realized in the form of compliance with health protocols that have been established by local authorities. Overall, the ethics of responsibility in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic demands concrete actions to protect oneself and others. Acts of responsibility that do not demand retaliation are humanitarian principles. The Covid-19 pandemic has taught us the importance of ethics of responsibility in social life, to build a better humanity.

From Levinas' ethics of responsibility, we can learn that in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, our engagement with 'the other' is an inevitable humanitarian duty. Responsibility as a human being during tragedy is an engagement to do good deeds, without demanding reciprocity for the good that has been done. Therefore, the ethics of responsibility for Levinas is 'I exist for others, but others not for me, I for you cannot be reversed by you for me'.⁵¹

E. Conclusion

From the brief description above, there are some important points concerning the concrete form of Levinas' ethics of responsibility. First, Emmanuel Levinas' concept of ethics of

⁴⁹ Levinas, 100–101.

⁵⁰ Sobon, “Konsep Tanggung Jawab Dalam Filsafat Emmanuel Levinas,” 2018.

⁵¹ Joas Adiprasetya, “Ya, Aku Penjaga Adikku! Etika Postmodern Dari Kacamata Emmanuel Levinas,” *Berakar Di Dalam Dia Dan Dibangun Atas Dia*, 2000, 142–55.

responsibility emphasizes a concrete humanitarian action oriented towards the 'face of the other' or other people. In the context of the covid-19 pandemic, complying with health protocols with the aim of protecting others from the dangers of the covid-19 virus is an action that is in line with Levinas' ethical principle of responsibility. Second, Levinas' ethics of responsibility has asymmetrical characteristics. In a sense, to do responsibility in terms of doing good should not demand that others do the same to us. Levinas' ethics of responsibility requires us to have an empathetic attitude. Third, that the discussion of Emmanuel Levinas' ethics of responsibility in the co-19 pandemic humanitarian disaster is very limited to this context, so it has limitations on the breadth and depth of his ethical philosophy. Suggestions for future research, so that the concept of ethics and responsibility in a concrete Emmanuel Levinas perspective can be explained more deeply, it is hoped that it will not be faced in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic alone.

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