

## Cultural Domination in New Normal Implementation on Behalf of Pandemic Covid 19

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### Abstract

*This study focuses on the cultural domination effect in society in the New Normal era. This study is a field study. The data was collected through data inventory, then is analyzed and interpreted. The result of this research showed three aspects of the new normal culture in society, firstly, ideally, the New normal lifestyle should be socialized in society cultural forum, such as forum group discussion, colloquy, seminar, etc. Secondly, the society will be more familiar with the New Era lifestyle, when its implementation accommodates cultural values of society and respect the ritual ceremony of custom and culture. Thirdly, the New Normal lifestyle implementation will be more convenient to be accepted in society, when it improved the role of custom and society leaders. Fourthly, the definition and the meaning of the New Normal lifestyle, nowadays, should be enriched by the meaning of health care in line with a cultural society that tends to community health care more than to personality health care.*

**Keywords:** culture, new normal, covid pandemic, communalism, society

## Dominasi Budaya pada Implementasi New Normal dalam Menghadapi Pandemi Covid-19

### Abstrak

*Kajian ini berfokus pada pengaruh dominasi budaya dalam masyarakat di era New Normal. Penelitian ini merupakan studi lapangan. Data dikumpulkan melalui inventarisasi data, kemudian dianalisis dan diinterpretasikan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan tiga aspek budaya new normal di masyarakat, pertama, idealnya gaya hidup new normal harus disosialisasikan dalam forum budaya masyarakat, seperti forum diskusi kelompok, kolokium, seminar, dan lainnya. Kedua, masyarakat akan lebih akrab dengan gaya hidup Era Baru, ketika implementasinya mengakomodasi nilai-nilai budaya masyarakat dan menghormati upacara ritual adat dan budaya. Ketiga, penerapan gaya hidup New Normal akan lebih mudah diterima di masyarakat, bila ditingkatkan peran adat dan tokoh masyarakat. Keempat, pengertian dan makna gaya hidup New Normal dewasa ini harus diperkaya dengan makna pelayanan kesehatan sejalan dengan budaya masyarakat yang lebih mengutamakan pelayanan kesehatan masyarakat daripada pelayanan kesehatan kepribadian.*

**Kata kunci:** budaya, new normal, pandemi covid, komunalisme, masyarakat

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## A. Introduction

July 2021 became the peak period of the second wave of the Covid pandemic in Indonesia. Indonesia was ranked first in the eyes of the world for the quantity of Covid sufferers and the death rate due to the pandemic. Indonesia has experienced a Covid pandemic since the beginning of 2019 and the level of severity is graphically bumpy and is currently entering the second wave whose conditions are more severe than the first wave due to the emergence of a new variant of Covid 19, the Delta type which is more virulent due to its high transmission rate and the level of risk of causing infection death is also faster. SARS-CoV-2 Delta variant or B.1.617 has been determined by WHO to be included in the Variant of Concern (VoC) list as of May 31, 2021. The consideration is that it fulfills one or more of the three impacts, namely greater transmission power.<sup>1</sup> The writer is called to be concerned about this situation and study its massive spread in society. It is undeniable that the government and the entire community are involved in working with this second wave of the pandemic, so the PPKM policy has been issued since July 3, 2021, to reduce the rate of transmission of the Covid virus, which is quite massive in the territory of Indonesia.<sup>2</sup>

The surging increase in the number of victims of the Covid pandemic in Indonesia can be suspected to be due to the high mobility of the Indonesian people in celebrating major religious holidays such as Eid al-Fitr, Christmas, New Year, and Eid al-Adha.<sup>3</sup> The community celebrates it with homecoming mobility, gathering, sharing the graves of relatives, family gatherings, and others which are

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<sup>1</sup> Wuragil, Zakarias: "*Begini Covid-19 Varian Delta Dipastikan Menyebar di Kudus*", Tempo.Com. <https://tekno.tempo.co/read/1472800/begini-covid-19-varian-delta-dipastikan-menyebar-di-kudus>, downloaded on July 1, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> The Indonesian Doctors Association (IDI) revealed that the spike in Covid-19 cases in Indonesia was not caused by the Eid holiday. Wahyuni Sahara. "IDI Reveals the Increase in Covid-19 Cases in Indonesia Due to the Delta Variant, Not Homecoming", Kompas. <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2021/06/29/09344201/idi-ungkap-kasus-covid-19-di-indonesia-naik-akibat-varian-delta-bukan-mudik>, downloaded on June 30, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Kudus is one of the areas where the number of COVID-19 investigations has spiked sharply after Eid al-Fitr 2021. Based on the report of the Kudus Regency COVID-19 Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling, Saturday (12/6/2021), positive confirmation cases in the area increased by 172 patients, increasing to 172 patients. total to 10,525 people. Irwan Syambudi. "*28 Warga Kudus Terinfeksi Varian Delta COVID-19*", Tirto. <https://tirto.id/ggPZ>, downloaded on 01 July 2021.

efforts to maintain traditions and customs.<sup>4</sup> The problem that the writer wants to examine is how does the implementation of the New Normal deal with the culture and traditions of society? What factors need to be considered in implementing the New Normal in the face of a strong culture in society?

## **B. Research methods**

This research is a study of the philosophy of culture regarding the philosophical views that exist in the field. This type of research is qualitative research with a philosophical interpretation of events. The research focus is on the influence of culture and tradition on the implementation of the New Normal in Indonesian society. The primary source of the study is the phenomenon of the clash of cultures and the implementation of the New Normal in society which is recorded in newspapers and news in the mass media. Secondary sources are articles in journals and the like that complement in more depth. These sources are inventoried and then systematized, then the critical interpretation is carried out to gain a new understanding in dealing with the Covid 19 pandemic and the implementation of a New Normal in society.<sup>5</sup>

Data collection begins with an inventory of data related to the phenomenon of the explosion in the number of victims of the Covid pandemic in several areas, then the data inventory is analyzed and interpreted by the author. The author systematically arranges the data by organising it, interpreting it, synthesizing it, and then doing a critical philosophical review. The results of the process are followed by making implementations and conclusions. The author hopes that the final results of this research can be used to understand the challenges of implementing the New Normal and the opportunities that can be used for its implementation in society.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Deputy Health Minister Dante Saksono Harbuwono said the spike in Covid-19 cases due to population mobility during Lebaran 2021 had already begun to be seen. Taufik Ismail. "Wamenkes Sebut Lonjakan Kasus Covid-19 Akibat Mudik Lebaran 2021 Sudah Terlihat", *Tribun News*. <https://www.tribunnews.com/corona/2021/05/24/wamenkes-sebut-lonjakan-kasus-covid-19-akibat-mudik-lebaran-2021-sudah-terlihat>, downloaded on June 23, 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Anton Bakker. *Metodologi Penelitian Filsafat*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1990. p. 91-97.

<sup>6</sup> "...provides a new interpretation of the worldview that underlies the culture concerned and its phenomena. Thus, a breakthrough can occur in understanding the basics of the group's life Anton Bakker. *Metodologi Penelitian Filsafat*, Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1990. p. 93.

### C. Results and Discussion

The results of the study are several findings related to the still strong culture in responding to the Covid pandemic and people's attitudes towards the New Normal. The results are as follows:

#### 1. Keep living traditional culture during the Covid pandemic

The second wave of Covid cases was due to the presence of the new Delta variant that spread in Indonesia, starting with the emergence of the first case in Pati, Central Java. The Pati case occurred because a worker was returning home during the month of *Ramadan* and holding a thanksgiving for neighbors and residents.<sup>7</sup> Most of the residents are infected and exposed to the Covid virus. Starting from the Pati area, the case grew and spread to surrounding districts such as Kudus, Jepara, and others. Likewise, the case that occurred in the Bangkalan district, where Indonesian workers returned home and brought the Covid Delta virus variant to the Bangkalan community, resulted in many victims in the area.<sup>8</sup> The beginning of the problem stems from the willingness of the residents to continue holding thanksgiving activities in the form of prayers and recitations by inviting many residents to maintain a friendship. The intention of the thanksgiving invitation is because the residents feel that they have the safety of being able to return to their families after working abroad for several years.<sup>9</sup>

Another case that the government has anticipated is the homecoming culture at the time of Eid celebrations. Even though strict restrictions have been put in place by the government, there are still many cases of people determined to go home during a pandemic due to the encouragement of a culture of friendship and family gatherings in the village. The homecoming culture is one of the main

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<sup>7</sup> The 39 residents came from Kuryokalangan Village, Gabus District, Pati Regency, positive for COVID-19. They were infected after attending a *manaqib* recitation celebration at the house of one of the residents who had returned home from Jakarta. News article: Artikel berita: "39 Warga Pati Positif COVID, Tertular Orang yang Baru Mudik dari Jakarta", <https://kumparan.com/kumparannews/39-warga-pati-positif-covid-tertular-orang-yang-baru-mudik-dari-jakarta-1veGr3psszN/full> downloaded on May 1, 2021, at 23.13 WIB.

<sup>8</sup> Jawa Pos, ""*Pengidap Covid-19 Varian Baru Bertambah*", Jawa Pos Daily, 21 June 2021, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Bangkalan Regent R. Abdul Latif Amin Imron said the spike in Covid-19 cases in the area he led was triggered by transmission to the family cluster after they went home for Eid. Dadang Kurnia. "Lonjakan Covid-19 Bangkalan Didominasi Klaster Keluarga", *Republika.com*.. <https://www.republika.co.id/berita/quf1lo349/lonjakan-covid19-bangkalan-didominasi-klaster-keluarga>, downloaded on June 10, 2021.

causes of the spread of Covid cases in Indonesia. After Lebaran, according to the Javanese calendar tradition, it is the big month, which is the best month to hold family celebrations such as weddings, circumcisions, fiancés, and others. The author considers that some people celebrating celebrations tend to ignore health protocols and ignore the dangers of a pandemic.<sup>10</sup>

The author concludes that the explosion of Covid cases in Indonesia, especially in Java after the Eid al-Fitr and Eid celebrations, is not only due to the homecoming culture, but also the understanding and mindset in the community paradigm regarding the best time and time to carry out celebrations. Most of the outbreak of the second wave of Covid was caused by clusters of celebrations and traditional celebrations in society.<sup>11</sup>

## 2. Government policies based on laws and regulations

Since the pandemic broke out in Indonesia in 2020, the Indonesian government has issued several policies related to overcoming the Covid pandemic for the safety of its citizens. The Central Government sets 9 provinces in priority handling, namely DKI Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, East Java, Bali, South Kalimantan, North Sumatra, South Sulawesi, and Papua. The government established the Covid-19 Handling Task Force (Keppres no. 7 of 2020) and the establishment of PSBB (Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 21 of 2020) and Disciplinary Law Enforcement of Health Protocols (Presidential Instruction of the Republic of Indonesia No. 6 of 2020). In the scale of the pandemic handling policy, the Indonesian government implements its policies to be implemented by the regions. In the New Normal, policies from the central

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<sup>10</sup> "Today's most cases (donated) are from Pandeglang Regency from the celebration cluster," said Banten COVID-19 Task Force Spokesperson Ati Pramudji Hastuti. Bachtiar Rifa'i. "*Muncul Klaster Hajatan, 162 Warga Pandeglang Positif Corona*", Detik.Com. <https://news.detik.com/berita-jawa-barat/d-5322527/muncul-klaster-hajatan-162-warga-pandeglang-positif-corona> , downloaded on 3 February 2021.

<sup>11</sup> "Ratri said several large clusters that were still active as of Saturday (19/6/2021) were the Rewangan cluster in Banyuwangi, Ampel District with 37 cases, the Islamic boarding school cluster in Cepogo with 34 cases, the celebration case in Sumber, Simo District with 30 cases, as well as the community service cluster in the Dam as many as 15 cases." Bayu Jadmiko Adi, "*Dari Hajatan Hingga Kerja Bakti, Ini Daftar Klaster Covid-19 yang Masih Aktif di Boyolali*", <https://cmsx.solopos.com/dari-hajatan-hingga-kerja-bakti-ini-daftar-klaster-covid-19-yang-masih-aktif-di-boyolali-1134116>, downloaded on June 23, 2021.

government to provinces and cities and districts regarding the 3 M (wearing masks, keeping distance, and washing hands) and 3 T (Tracing, Testing, Treatment) strategies. For example, in East Java's province, the Governor of East Java issued regulation no. 18 of 2020 concerning Guidelines for Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) in dealing with the Covid 19 pandemic. These guidelines were followed up with several policies taking into account the fluctuations in the Covid-19 pandemic conditions in East Java.<sup>12</sup>

In the face of the second wave of the Covid pandemic caused by the Delta variant, the Central Government imposed the Implementation of Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) which regulates activities and mobility in the community more strictly with various restrictions and sanctions for violations.<sup>13</sup> All officers from the Police, Military, Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP), and the Transportation Service are deployed in the field to regulate community mobility to reduce the spread of the Covid pandemic. The author considers that the legal approach used by the government appears to be effective after the PPKM was extended with a graphic decrease in the number of citizens exposed to Covid.

The impact of the PPKM, which was extended for more than one month (3 July to 2 August 2021 and which was later extended again), has weakened the economy of the Indonesian people.<sup>14</sup> Many industry players and traders, large and small, have complained and raised white flags as a sign of surrender due to the long-running PPKM.<sup>15</sup> Not a few small traders and the lower middle class are

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<sup>12</sup> Kiki Apriliyani, M. Daud Irsya Latif, Dyah Mutiarin. "Narasi Budaya Arek Suroboyo dan Pandemi Covid-19: Sebuah Perspektif Agile Governance di Kota Surabaya", in *Jurnal Transformative*, Vol. 7 Nomor 1 Tahun 2021, p. 1-28.

<sup>13</sup> President Joko Widodo said that the government had decided to implement the Implementation of Emergency Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) from July 3 to July 20, 2021. Press, Media and Information Bureau of the Presidential Secretariat. "Presiden Sampaikan Keterangan Terkait Penetapan PPKM Darurat" , <https://www.presidentri.go.id/foto/president-sampaikan-keterangan-terkait-penetapan-ppkm-darurat/>, downloaded on 3 July 2021, 22.00 WIB.

<sup>14</sup> This condition has an impact on the economy, especially small economic actors and informal workers who daily earn their livelihood from people passing by. Emergency PPKM makes the condition of malls or shopping centers and traditional market traders worse. Heru Margianto. "PPKM Darurat, Ekonomi Rakyat Sekarat?" <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2021/07/21/09570501/ppkm-darurat-ekonomi-rakyat-sekarat?page=1> , downloaded on July 25, 2021.

<sup>15</sup> Ikappi's Head of Research and Development, Badrussalam, said that there was strong pressure, especially for market traders in the non-basic sector. "In our records, there is around 40 percent of traditional markets that have put up white flags (surrendered). already positive starting in the second quarter, there shouldn't be many traders complaining now," said Badrussalam. Dedy



screaming because of the inhumane treatment of the Covid task force in enforcing PPKM. There were public protests and demonstrations against the government, which judged that the government had failed in overcoming the Covid pandemic which was spreading widely in the community.<sup>16</sup>

The severity of the second wave of the Covid pandemic experienced by the Indonesian people had brought Indonesia to the first rank in the eyes of the world as the country with the most victims and the most vulnerable to handling it.<sup>17</sup> This is indeed evidenced by the overload conditions of most hospitals, the increasing number of Covid patients, lack of medicines, and the unavailability of oxygen cylinders. Some patients who do not receive hospital treatment due to the absence of beds and places, do self-isolation (Isoman) both at home and in hotels.<sup>18</sup>

### **3. Handling the pandemic by the local culture-based community**

The community has its ways of dealing with the outbreak of the Covid pandemic in the second wave in 2021.<sup>19</sup> To treat Covid patients, in addition to using medical drugs, it turns out that people are trying to treat them with a cultural approach by using traditional medicine such as using spices, drinking herbal medicine, using herbal oils such as eucalyptus for inhalation and steam, sunbathing, and other forms. People tend to take advantage of both, namely the

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Dharmawan Naustion. "Ekonomi Positif, Ikappi: Pedagang Kibarkan Bendera Putih". <https://www.republika.co.id/berita/qxdkcl349/ekonomi-positif-ikappi-pedagang-kibarkan-bendera-putih>, downloaded Saturday, August 7, 2021.

<sup>16</sup> On social media and media reports, there are a lot of cases of friction between residents and the Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP) officers who carry out control during the implementation of the Emergency Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM). Luthfia Ayu Azanella, "Konflik Petugas dan Masyarakat dalam Penegakan PPKM Darurat, Apa yang Seharusnya Dilakukan?", Kompas, <https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2021/07/18/143000665/konflik-petugas-dan-masyarakat-dalam-penegakan-ppkm-darurat-apa-yang>., downloaded on 20 July 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Based on data from Worldometers.info on Friday, July 16, 2021, at 08.30 WIB, Indonesia ranks first in the addition of daily cases of Covid-19. It was recorded that there was an addition of 56,757 cases on Thursday, July 15, 2021. Syailendra Persada. "Terkini: Indonesia Urutan Pertama Penambahan Covid-19 Harian, Kalahkan India". Tempo, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1483810/terkini-indonesia-urutan-pertama-penambahan-covid-19-harian-kalahkan-india/full&view=>, downloaded on 18 July 2021.

<sup>18</sup>Deti Mega Purnamasari. "Masih Terjadi Overload Pasien di RS, IDI Minta Pemerintah Perpanjang PPKM Darurat", Kompas. <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2021/07/19/14070201/masih-terjadi-overload-pasien-di-rs-idi-minta-pemerintah-perpanjang-ppkm>, downloaded on 20 July 2021.

<sup>19</sup>Hendro Situmorang. "Masa Pandemi, Minat Masyarakat Beli Obat Herbal Meningkat", Berita satu.com, <https://www.beritasatu.com/kesehatan/801025/masa-pandemi-minat-masyarakat-beli-obat-herbal-meningkat>, downloaded on 18 July 2021.

medical approach to medicine and traditional medicine in overcoming and curing Covid. Many residents make traditional ingredients that are distributed to other residents to maintain mutual health. The concern between residents in dealing with Covid and maintaining health through the culture of sharing traditional medicines has made the Covid pandemic a common health problem faced with togetherness and cooperation.

To overcome the unavailability of places in hospitals due to hospitals being full, people tend to choose to self-isolate (*isoman*) at home. Self-isolation is much assisted and supported by residents who help by providing medicine, food, and safety for those who are *isoman*. The culture of kinship and cooperation can be seen in the cooperation of the villagers in helping people who are sick with Covid and *isoman* in their village.<sup>20</sup>

To overcome transmission from outside, residents have restricted visitors from outside by taking turns guarding to completely close the road access to the village area (lockdown). The closure of some areas carried out by community members shows a strong culture of empathy and concern for the fate of others in the surrounding environment.<sup>21</sup> Closures and several citizen policies in dealing with the pandemic were carried out through community consultations. The local culture of deliberation is carried out by community members for the good of living together so that more people are not exposed to Covid. There are even villages that say they will handle their residents who are affected by Covid independently and are not taken or referred to government health installations on the grounds of the psychological health of the sufferers because if they are referred to the hospital, the residents will suffer more due to stress and are separated from their families.

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<sup>20</sup> The community of Mata Air Village, Kupang Regency, East Nusa Tenggara collectively helps supply the various needs of residents exposed to Covid-19 who are self-isolating., Ani Nursalikhah. "Warga Desa Mata Air Gotong Royong Bantu Warga Isoman", *Republika*. <https://www.republika.co.id/berita/qx8syb366/warga-desa-mata-air-gotong-royong-bantu-warga-isoman>, downloaded August 4, 2021. See also Andi Hartik. "91 Warga Satu Kelurahan Isoman, Masyarakat di Kota Malang Gotong Royong Memasak". *Kompas*. <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2021/07/22/211227478/91-warga-satu-kelurahan-isoman-masyarakat-di-kota-malang-gotong-royong>, downloaded on July 25, 2021.

<sup>21</sup> Restrictions on a micro-scale by closing village and village portals. Limitation of cultural scale on the Indigenous Bedouin community, the Enggros indigenous community in the Abepura district, Irian Jaya, in Toraja. Dedy Afrianto. "Daya Tahan dan tantangan masyarakat Adat Kala Pandemi", *Kompas*, Sunday, August 8, 2021, p. 4.



Residents provide several healthy homes to be maximized as isoman places for sick residents and residents provide themselves with their respective capacities as medical personnel, nurses, security volunteers, providing food, and others.<sup>22</sup>

## D. Critical analysis & review

### 1. Analysis

The author analyzes the causes of the outbreak of the Covid pandemic in the second wave from the perspective of cultural philosophy. In dealing with the Covid pandemic, according to the author's analysis, Indonesian people tend to deal with it culturally. The Covid pandemic is seen as a dangerous epidemic or pageblug that must be faced without compromising people's freedom to express their culture.

First, the repetition of the increasing number of Covid sufferers in waves (in 2020 and 2021) is caused by the strong culture of going home and friendship that is lived by the community.<sup>23</sup> All forms of regulations issued by the government such as program PSBB and PPKM are not seen as an obstacle for the community to express their family culture, which is manifested by going back and forth, holding thanksgiving celebrations and celebrations.<sup>24</sup> Homecoming is synonymous with

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<sup>22</sup> "The latest data is that there are 40,000 villages or 53 percent that have made Village Volunteers Fight Covid. While the other 47 percent are still in the process and continue to be monitored and evaluated," Halim said, Sunday (4/19/2020). See Aprianus Doni Tolok. "Laporan Menteri Halim, Begini Upaya 40.000 Desa Lawan Covid-19", <https://ekonomi.bisnis.com/read/20200419/9/1229280/laporan-menteri-halim-begini-upaya-40.000-desa-lawan-covid-19>, downloaded on June 5, 2021.

<sup>23</sup> Homecoming is the activity of migrants/migrant workers to return to their hometowns. Homecoming comes from the Javanese "*Mulih Dhisik*" which means go home first. Homecoming in Indonesia is identical to the annual tradition that occurs before major religious holidays, for example before Eid al-Fitr. At that time, there is an opportunity to gather with relatives who are scattered overseas, besides of course also being friendly with parents. cf. Budi Rahayu. *Sosiologi Paket C Tingkatan V Modul Tema 2 : Budaya Mudik*. Jakarta: Direktorat Pembinaan Pendidikan Keaksaraan dan Kesetaraan-Ditjen Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini dan Pendidikan Masyarakat-Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2018, p. 10.

<sup>24</sup> Homecoming Eid is the original tradition and culture of Indonesia. Culturally going home is a legacy or even a necessity. But morally and spiritually going home is also a form of children's devotion to their parents. ...homecoming is not only a physical journey but also a spiritual journey. cf. H. Abdul Hamid Arribathi, Qurotul Aini. "*Mudik Dalam Perspektif Budaya Dan Agama*", (Kajian Realistis Perilaku Sumber Daya Manusia ), in *Jurnal CICES, Volume 4, Number 1, February 2018*, p. 2-10.

celebrating big days. Clifford Geertz stated that the *Riyaya* is the most common, the most festive, and the most collective celebration.<sup>25</sup>

Second, the strong hegemony of traditional culture that is lived and permeates the way of thinking and paradigm of the Indonesian people make them ignore all regulations issued by the government in dealing with Covid, especially in the implementation of the New Normal such as wearing masks, maintaining distance, washing hands and others. The culture of going home and the meeting between families is taboo not to greet each other by shaking hands, eating together, and communicating with one another as brothers (*sedulur*).<sup>26</sup>

The celebration is carried out by inviting many residents as an expression of the joy and happiness of the owner of the celebration to neighbors and all those invited to the celebration party. The cultural behavior of the community during a pandemic shows the strength of cultural values such as kinship, friendship, brotherhood, and concern that are upheld by the community. If these joint activities are limited, it will lead to citizen dissatisfaction because they feel that something is incomplete (*durung jangkep*). Frans Magnis saw that incomplete conditions would interfere with harmony and could lead to chaos.<sup>27</sup> If there are things that are not complete (*durung jangkep*) then the community sees a lack of feeling, thought, and spirituality so that restrictions on activities and the presence of residents due to the pandemic are seen as reducing blessings and happiness for the organizers of the celebration itself. Encounters with relatives and friends in complete conditions and a large number of guests present are believed to bring blessings to the owner of the celebration because there are blessings and prayers from others who are present at the invitation and celebration.<sup>28</sup> As Geertz mentions, the meaning of *Slametan* is that people will not feel different from others in a regional community. People who do not perform the *slametan* are considered

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<sup>25</sup>Clifford, Geertz, *Agama Jawa: Abangan, Santri, Priyayi dalam Kebudayaan Jawa*, Yogyakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2013, p.5.

<sup>26</sup>H. Abdul Hamid Arribathi, Qurotul Aini. "Mudik Dalam Perspektif Budaya Dan Agama", (Kajian Realistis Perilaku Sumber Daya Manusia ), dalam *Jurnal CICES, Vol.4, Nomor. 1, Februari 2018*, p. 2-10.

<sup>27</sup>Franz Magnis Suseno. *Etika Jawa: Sebuah Analisa tentang Falsafi Kebijaksanaan Hidup Jawa*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama. 1985, p. 94.

<sup>28</sup>Clifford, Geertz, *Agama Jawa: Abangan, Santri, Priyayi dalam Kebudayaan Jawa*, Yogyakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2013, p.5.

to be ordinary people or not considered human, which means that they are considered unusual in their social group.<sup>29</sup> The culture of friendship and holding celebrations is seen as an important culture by all circles of society so the government's recommendation not to go home and not hold celebrations seems easy to be violated by people from various circles, ranging from the less educated to those with higher education.<sup>30</sup> This shows that people easily ignore the provisions of the New Normal and are more concerned with living their cultural values.

Third, the increasing number of victims of the Covid pandemic due to the new variant, which is more virulent in its distribution, causing high hospital occupancy rates, so that they have to carry out *isoman*, has encouraged public awareness to care for each other and work together to help others who suffer from Covid. This awareness is based on the strong traditional cultural values that are still lived by the Indonesian people. As Frans Magnis stated that *gotong royong* creates harmony by helping each other.<sup>31</sup> The rise of concern for those who suffer such as the provision of free food for *isoman* residents, donations of necessities, medicine and security, and welfare for people who are sick with Covid shows the value of solidarity, sharing the same fate and brotherhood that is still strong for the community. These cultural values are the values of living together communally which are the main characteristics of people who hold eastern customs. In Javanese tradition, there is a value of togetherness which is referred to as "*rubuh-rubuh gedang, rog-rog asem*" (like falling banana trees, like tamarind leaves that fall together) which is interpreted as suffering together, falling together will be borne together, jointly and severally.

From the three things above, the author concludes that the dominance of traditional culture in society is still strong enough in dealing with the New Normal

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<sup>29</sup>Clifford, Geertz, *Agama Jawa: Abangan, Santri, Priyayi dalam Kebudayaan Jawa*, Yogyakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2013, p.8.

<sup>30</sup> Franz Magnis stated that because all the neighbors came along; then the slametan reveals that there is harmony and harmony among the neighbors; thus the peace of society is renewed and dangerous forces are neutralized. Franz Magnis Suseno. *Etika Jawa: Sebuah Analisa tentang Falsafi Kebijaksanaan Hidup Jawa*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama. 1985. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama. 1985, p. 89.

<sup>31</sup>Franz Magnis Suseno. *Etika Jawa: Sebuah Analisa tentang Falsafi Kebijaksanaan Hidup Jawa*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama. 1985, p. 50.

which demands strict individual health protocols, discipline in its application. New Normal requires a new awareness in responding to it. The problem is, to what extent is this cultural influence in the implementation of the New Normal in society during the current pandemic?

## 2. Critical Review

The culture that is lived by the Indonesian people is cultural values that have long been loved and passed down from generation to generation. These cultural values will develop and change along with the changing times even though they still do not leave fundamental things as their characteristics. Indonesian society with eastern cultural customs is a society that adheres to communalism, namely an understanding that upholds the value of living together more than individual values.<sup>32</sup> Eastern society prioritizes a harmonious life together rather than prioritizing personal interests. Those who are concerned with their interests will be judged as those who destroy the order of harmonious coexistence.<sup>33</sup> Those who do not seek togetherness will be seen as others who can be considered unfit to be involved in life together. A culture based on communalism will encourage each individual to be willing to sacrifice himself for the public interest or group interests. In a communal culture, the existence of individuals will be protected by the group and fought for by the group as long as the individual can be loyal and able to live the communal values of the group. Individual thinking must be adjusted and harmonized with the thinking of the community. If some thoughts and behaviors are different from those of the community, then the individual is considered deviant, or general, or geeky or eccentric, which means different, different and must be treated differently by the community. Therefore, The values of togetherness and brotherhood are the main values in society above all other values. Thus, in the implementation of the New Normal, which prioritizes health

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<sup>32</sup> The notion of communalism gets additional -ism- shows the existence of an understanding of the existence of an ideal school of thought that categorizes the principles of prioritizing groups or communities over individual interests. Communalism is based on the notion of kinship, regionalism, religion, ethnic identity, and others as a binder and impetus for each individual to prioritize community over his interests as individuals. See RM Maciver and CH Page's understanding of the community concept in the footnote of Koentjaraningrat, *Pengantar Antropologi*, Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2015, p. 119.

<sup>33</sup> Franz Magnis Suseno. *Etika Jawa: Sebuah Analisa tentang Falsafi Kebijakan Hidup Jawa*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1985, p. 53.

protocols such as wearing masks and maintaining distance, restrictions on mobility, it is seen as contrary to the value of brotherhood which prioritizes close, warm, and friendly encounters and is free to express feelings in the community. Gatherings, celebrations, and thanksgiving together with the New Normal health protocol have become less meaningful and less fulfilling the sense of community culture. The use of masks and social distancing as well as avoiding crowds are considered as actions that reduce the meaning of community harmony and limit the cultural expression of the community that prioritizes meeting, close conversation, physical closeness, and freedom of expression. in the implementation of the New Normal which prioritizes health protocols such as wearing masks and maintaining distance, restrictions on mobility, it is seen as contrary to the value of brotherhood which prioritizes close, warm, and friendly encounters and is free to express feelings in the community. Gatherings, celebrations, and thanksgiving together with the New Normal health protocol have become less meaningful and less fulfilling the sense of community culture. The use of masks and social distancing as well as avoiding crowds are considered as actions that reduce the meaning of community harmony and limit the cultural expression of the community that prioritizes meeting, close conversation, physical closeness, and freedom of expression. in the implementation of the New Normal which prioritizes health protocols such as wearing masks and maintaining distance, restrictions on mobility, it is seen as contrary to the value of brotherhood which prioritizes close, warm, and friendly encounters and is free to express feelings in the community. Gatherings, celebrations, and thanksgiving together with the New Normal health protocol have become less meaningful and less fulfilling the sense of community culture. The use of masks and social distancing as well as avoiding crowds are considered as actions that reduce the meaning of community harmony and limit the cultural expression of the community that prioritizes meeting, close conversation, physical closeness, and freedom of expression. This is seen as contrary to the value of brotherhood which prioritizes close, warm, and friendly encounters and is free to express feelings in the community. Gatherings, celebrations, and thanksgiving together with the New Normal health protocol have become less meaningful and less fulfilling the sense of community culture. The use

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The implementation of the New Normal in the current pandemic period has its challenges in traditional societies related to the cultural values they live in. Cultivating the New Normal as a new way of life in people's behavior is not easy because the value of individual health and life safety has not become a fundamental value in society because their priority is safety together as a group. The sign of communal health is *slamet*, the absence of chaos. It is defined as "nothing", nothing means that no harm or ill will befall anyone.<sup>34</sup> The threat of the Covid 19 pandemic is faced as a common problem and must be shared. The violent Covid pandemic will be seen as a *pageblug*, namely a disease that is mass in nature to be shared as a community unit and not individual.

The handling of the Covid 19 pandemic in traditional communities will be applied as joint handling as a result of an agreement through deliberation. The results of the deliberation become guidelines in overcoming the pandemic in their community. Frans Magnis stated that deliberation is the best way for traditional communities to solve various problems because there is the unity of heart and mutual determination.<sup>35</sup> The form of handling the pandemic will be characterized by eastern traditions such as caring for those who are sick by working together

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<sup>34</sup>Clifford Geertz, *Agama Jawa: Abangan, Santri, Priyayi dalam Kebudayaan Jawa*, Yogyakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2013, p.8.

<sup>35</sup>Franz Magnis Suseno. *Etika Jawa: Sebuah Analisa tentang Falsafi Kebijaksanaan Hidup Jawa*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1985, p. 51.



and being borne together. One of the areas that use a cultural approach in dealing with Covid is the people of the City of Surabaya with the *Wani Covid* tough village movement, the *Jogo Tonggo* movement, and the like that involve local people through deliberation to maintain the health of their village residents.<sup>36</sup> Efforts are being made not to enforce individual health protocols according to the New Normal provisions, but instead, the efforts are communal, such as mass spraying of villages, village guarding to be selective for immigrants from outside, holding joint prayers to refuse to get rid of the *pageblug* of the Covid pandemic, work community service cleaning public facilities, working together to care for residents who are undergoing *isoman* in the village, joint donations for the sick, cooperation to build a house to be a healthy home for *isoman* and the like. Handling Covid in a communal culture is trying to make the environment and areas where people live become clean from the Covid virus and safe so that interactions between residents in the area can continue to run normally. Efforts to maintain health are more focused on maintaining regional and environmental health rather than maintaining individual health. If the environment is healthy and safe, then people don't need to wear masks, don't have to keep their distance, and so on. The health protocols that are enforced through the New Normal will weaken the ties of friendship and intimacy of the community members. According to Budiono, community dynamics can have a coherent direction but can also be incoherent. If there is excessive coercion, society can experience social anomalies and even disintegration. The health protocols that are enforced through the New Normal will weaken the ties of friendship and intimacy of the community members. According to Budiono, community dynamics can have a coherent direction but can also be incoherent. If there is excessive coercion, society can experience social anomalies and even disintegration. The health protocols that are enforced through the New Normal will weaken the ties of friendship and intimacy of the community members. According to Budiono, community dynamics can have a coherent direction but can

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<sup>36</sup> Public Relations Surabaya, ""*Sepenggal Kisah Suksesnya 'Kampung Tangguh Wani Jogo Suroboyo'*", Humas Surabaya Go.id., <https://humas.surabaya.go.id/2020/06/24/sepenggal-kisah-suksesnya-kampung-tangguh-wani-jogo-suroboyo/>, downloaded 27 June 2021.

also be incoherent. If there is excessive coercion, society can experience social anomalies and even disintegration.<sup>37</sup>

Based on a critical study of the culture of Indonesian society, which adheres to eastern thinking and prioritizes communalism, the authors consider that the implementation of the New Normal which is more concerned with individual awareness and personal discipline in its implementation experiences significant obstacles because the New Normal places more emphasis on individual awareness and interests while the Indonesian people most still live in a culture of communalism. The real impact in everyday life, community members will ignore the New Normal health protocol if they are in their community environment. People will implement the New Normal protocol if they leave their community for reasons of fear of being sanctioned if they violate government regulations, fear of the Covid task force, and security forces. They only use masks if there are officers present for control. The community still tends to carry out gathering activities and establish friendships in the forms of *cangkruk'an*, champions, huddles, gatherings, and similar activities in their community areas. This is what Budiono sees as an act of communication that takes place to give meaning to living together.<sup>38</sup> If these forms of communication are eliminated or limited, the meaning and norms of living together in society will be weakened.

Traditional societies have their resilience in maintaining the health of their citizens. Local wisdom that stands out is cooperation in seeking for its citizens to be helped independently if the government and health institutions are unable to handle it. About this Muhammad Alfian stated that culture protects humans from nature.<sup>39</sup> With their local wisdom, the community can manage independently and take care of its citizens who are suffering from Covid by involving their citizens who are competent in health, infrastructure, food, security, and welfare. The second wave of the Covid 19 pandemic, which hit so hard that it was limited to the

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<sup>37</sup>Budiono Kusumohamidjojo, *Filsafat Kebudayaan, Proses Realisasi Manusia*, Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2009, p. 155.

<sup>38</sup>Budiono Kusumohamidjojo, *Filsafat Kebudayaan, Proses Realisasi Manusia*, Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2009, p. 111.

<sup>39</sup>Muhammad Alfian. *Filsafat Kebudayaan*, Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2013, p. 86.

government's limitations, has shown the strength and rigidity of the communalism culture that the community lives in fighting the Covid 19 pandemic.

The clash of societal cultural dominance and the implementation of the New Normal to combat the Covid pandemic does not lie in the use of health control objects or devices. Nor is it a complex of regular action activities carried out in a disciplined manner by the community. The clash occurred in the first form of culture, which is directly related to the complex of ideas, values, and norms regarding human health and safety, both individually and in groups.<sup>40</sup> People with their culture have their ideas and values in dealing with the Covid pandemic that is different from the New Normal imposed by the government.

#### **E. IMPLEMENTATION**

The strength of the communalism culture in traditional societies that are faced with the implementation of the New Normal can be synergistic if it is placed in shared awareness for the welfare and tranquility of living together in society. Strong individual awareness of the importance of the presence of the community for his life can encourage the role of individuals in developing their communities in the face of the Covid 19 pandemic. Individual choices in responding to the New Normal correctly in the community can strengthen the community as long as the individual is accepted by the community and wants to integrate with the community without feeling excluded as the other. In reality, there are always individuals who have strong personality retention abilities, so that they can influence their society.<sup>41</sup>

Likewise, communal awareness of the importance of the New Normal can be built by prioritizing a cultural approach rather than a juridical approach and the massive power exercised by the government so far. Communal public awareness of the implementation of the New Normal can be done through cultural forums such as workshops, deliberation, community meetings, and the like. The implementation of the New Normal can be carried out properly without any restrictions on the implementation of communal activities such as thanksgiving,

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<sup>40</sup>Muhammad Alfian. *Filsafat Kebudayaan*, Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2013, p. 88.

<sup>41</sup>Budiono Kusumohamidjojo, *Filsafat Kebudayaan, Proses Realisasi Manusia*, Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2009, p. 123.

celebrations, gatherings, and the like. If these cultural activities are prohibited and restricted, it will lead to attitudes of antipathy towards the New Normal and even antipathy to the government.

The community's communal rejection of the implementation of the New Normal will further distance the common hope so that the New Normal will be more accepted and loved by the community. The implementation of PSBB and PPKM by limiting the mobility of citizens, blocking and banning activities will become a kind of "ticking time bomb", because these government policies do not fulfill the sense of being cultured with all their expressions, will be seen as repression that can lead to communal resistance and will cause turmoil. in society. The emergence of a pandemic wave that appears every year after the celebration of the big holidays of Eid al-Fitr, Christmas, New Year, Eid al-Adha will continue to repeat itself because of the implementation of the New Normal has so far ignored cultural strategies in its implementation.

Cultural strategies in the socialization of the New Normal for the community are: First, the socialization of the New Normal should be through cultural forums that are lived by the community such as deliberation, community meetings, gatherings, and the like. Second, the implementation of the New Normal will be more acceptable if it is implemented by taking into account the cultural values that are lived by the local community while still respecting the implementation of traditional and cultural events. Third, the implementation of the New Normal will be more easily accepted by the community if it involves the role of cultural figures and leaders who are accepted by the community. Fourth, the current understanding and repertoire of New Normal need to be enriched again with the understanding and meaning of health care in eastern culture, which tends to be more towards the health of community members than personal/individual.

## **F. CONCLUSION**

The implementation of the New Normal in cultural communities encounters serious obstacles from the attitude of the people who are still strong in living their cultural values. The New Normal's emphasis which is more on individual discipline in dealing with the culture of Indonesian society which tends to be communal

indeed requires a special strategy for its implementation. The community with its cultural values turned out to be able to play a role in overcoming the second wave of the pandemic by working together to help each other. They prefer communal ways to fight Covid rather than using individual methods. The community expects the implementation of the New Normal accompanied by various strict policies in regulating the mobility of citizens while still paying attention to and respecting the cultural values that are lived by the community. Awareness of the importance of the New Normal should not only be through a legal and power approach. The government should use a cultural approach by utilizing cultural forums in society.

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