

Implementation of ibn Miskawaih's Ethical Thought on Self-Meaning in the Social Environment

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Abstrak

Belakangan ini, moralitas terhadap Tuhan dan manusia mulai menurun. Hal ini dibuktikan dengan banyaknya berita terkait keseharian masyarakat yang menyimpang dari ajaran agama dan norma sosial, sehingga karena perbedaan menjadi pemicu kekerasan dan pembulian. Tujuan penelitian ini sebagai sebuah solusi bagi seseorang yang belum bisa mengendalikan dan menempatkan diri dengan memahami konsep etika Ibnu Miskawaih dan implementasinya. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah studi pustaka, dengan pendekatan historis-kritis. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan pemikiran etika Ibnu Miskawaih didasarkan pada pandangan tentang jiwa manusia. Tempat dimana seseorang pertama kali mengenal jiwanya dengan menyucikannya dari penyakit hati, dusta, dengki dan cinta berlebihan terhadap dunia. Penyakit hati dan penyucian jiwa bisa dicapai dengan belajar untuk selalu banyak beramal, menjauhi teman-teman yang serakah, hidup sederhana, belajar tentang agama dan mawas diri. Seseorang juga tidak boleh mempunyai ekstrim kelebihan dan ekstrim kekurangan, sehingga wajib memposisikan di tengah. Implementasi pemaknaan diri di lingkungan sosial dapat dilakukan dengan membersihkan hati, kemudian membiasakan diri berbuat baik sehingga nantinya menjadi kebiasaan yang mengarah pada kesehatan ilahi. Puncaknya adalah mampu berbuat baik secara langsung tanpa berpikir karena sudah menjadi kebiasaan untuk berbuat baik kepada siapapun walau berbeda keyakinan atau suku hingga negara. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan tentang kontribusi pemikiran Ibnu Miskawaih dalam pemaknaan diri di lingkungan sosial.

Kata Kunci: Ibnu Miskawaih; implementasi; pemaknaan diri; pemikiran etika

Abstract

Recently, morality towards God and man has begun to decline. This is evidenced by the many news related to people's daily lives that deviate from religious teachings and social norms, so that differences trigger violence and bullying. The purpose of this research is as a solution for someone who has not been able to control and position themselves by understanding the concept of Ibn Miskawaih's ethics and its implementation. The research method used is literature study, with a historical-critical approach. The findings of the study show that Ibn

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Miskawaih's ethical thinking is based on a view of the human soul. A place where a person first knows his soul by purifying it from liver disease, lies, envy and excessive love of the world. Liver disease and purification of the soul can be achieved by learning to always do a lot of charity, stay away from greedy friends, live simply, learn about religion and introspection. One should also not have extreme advantages and extreme disadvantages, so it is mandatory to position in the middle. The implementation of self-meaning in the social environment can be done by cleansing the heart, then getting used to doing good so that later it becomes a habit that leads to divine health. The peak is being able to do good directly without thinking because it has become a habit to do good to anyone regardless of beliefs or tribes to countries. This research provides insight into the contribution of Ibn Miskawaih's thought in self-meaning in the social environment.

Keywords: Ethical thought; Ibn Miskawaih; implementation; self meaning

INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, morality towards God and humans, especially for those who are different, has begun to decline greatly. This is evidenced by the many viral news both on TV and TikTok. Many people seem to admit that they love their God very much with many prayers, but behind it all, their daily life never reflects it. As an example of the social case of the 20s, people who profess to love God, because they misinterpret it, are able to create a society that has a different view from being said to be an infidel, so they must be killed or shunned. Not only that, the 2024 case involved one family because he wanted to reduce the burden on his family and was willing to let his child or partner be killed by himself under the pretext of saving him (Nyaman Bagus Purwaniawan, 2024). Then worse, the murder for socio-economic problems is willing to commit suicide. And this case from 2022-2023 according to the National Criminal Information Center of the Indonesian Police has increased from 900 cases found to 971 cases (Muhammad, 2023). Seeing this phenomenon, of course, it is not a reflection of good ethics and morals like his love for his God. Because he loves God, he must love his creatures, including the differences that exist to the tests given by God to him and respond to social problems in life.

In overcoming the above self-meaning in responding to something, it is not easy if it is not done gradually and has a figure or foundation that is in accordance with the teachings of Islam. Where in his mind a figure is able to position himself to respond to all forms of self to life, including those who have different beliefs or to all things that are His creatures. One of them is Ibn Miskawaih's ethical thought. Where in his mind there are many concepts that have been taught about humans knowing themselves, knowing their gods, and being ethical or moral according to Islamic teachings to God and created beings, including overcoming the phenomena above, so that the concept of ethics in Ibn

Miskawaih's philosophy is important to be researched and related to self-meaning in daily life in the world.

Basically, there have been several studies on the same topic. among them, 1) a study of Ethical Thought of *Tahdzib al Akhlaq wa Thathir al A'raq* by Nizar et al (Nizar et al., 2017), which discusses ethics through the study of books, 2) A Study of Ibn Miskawaih's Concept of Thought on Moral Education and its Relevance to the World of Islamic Education in Modern Times (Anam & Lessy, 2022), which found a relevation in modern investigation, 3) a study of Philosophical Analysis of Ibn Miskawaih's Thought (Sketch of Biography, Concept of Educational Thought, and Its Relevance in the Modern Era) (Hidayat & Kesuma, 2019), whose results are not much different from the above, 4) the study of the Dialectic of Moral Education in the View of Ibn Miskawaih and Al-Gazali (Prasetiya, 2018) which produces about the importance of morals for a person in the world, 5) a study on the Reconstruction of Character Education in the Era of Globalization: An Analysis Study of the Concept of Ibn Miskawaih's Thought (Maragustam Siregar, 2022) which results related to the characters that must exist in the era of globalization such as tolerance, honesty, 6) a study of the History of the Development of Ethical Thought by Rahman (Yasin, 2017) which focuses on the history of Ibn Miskawaih's thought, 7) a philosophical analysis of Ibn Miskawaih's thought (biographical sketch, concept of educational thought, and its relevance in the modern era) by Ahmad which discusses biography in general (Hidayat & Kesuma, 2019), 8) A Study of Character Education According to Ibn Miskawaih and Its Meaning of Learning During the Pandemic by Mohammad Sukron (Mubin, 2020) which results in the existence of characters that must be present in learning during the covid-19 pandemic, 9) the study of Character Education in Islam: a philosophical analysis of Ibn Miskawaih in the Book of *Tahzibul Akhlak* (Maula, 2021) which argues that a person's character reflects his divinity, and 10) Maiwan's study Understanding Ethical Theories: Horizons and Views which results in many ethical views for Muslim and non-Muslim scholars (Mohammad, 2018).

From the ten previous studies, they are regrouped into three main things, namely discussions related to the original book of Ibn Miskawaih's works, examining Ibn Miskawaih's thoughts through the works of other figures and self-meaning in general and in the world of economics and education in the era of globalization. The gap that exists and has not been discussed is the meaning of self in terms of relating to an individual in practicing the ethical concept of Ibn Miskawaih. Therefore, in this study, there are two main problem formulations, namely about the concept of Ibn Miskawaih's ethics and how the form of self-meaning in Ibn Miskawaih's self-meaning.

The purpose of this article is to provide an overview to the reader, about the description of the location of Ibn Miskawaih's thoughts, starting from the theory of the

middle point, good, and bad. And man's self-meaning to God and other humans well without being excessive. In achieving this, he must start the ethics by diving into the human soul because the science of the soul has its own virtues, until later it will be based on the theory of the middle way. The expected benefit is to provide knowledge about the concept of Ibn Miskawaih's ethical thought and its implementation in the social environment to all readers.

Therefore, the main point of the author in this study is to focus on the implementation of Ibn Miskawaih's ethical thinking on self-meaning in the social environment. The formulation of the research problem includes questions about the form of Ibn Miskawaih's ethical thinking and its implementation on self-meaning in the social environment. Through these two problem formulations, the research will get an in-depth and relevant analysis so that the above problems are answered.

RESEARCH METHODS

The object studied and focused on is the implementation of ethical thinking in Ibn Miskawaih's view of self-meaning in the social environment. The types of research used are library research (Zed, 2017). The reason for this selection is because in this study, it seeks to express meaning descriptively through data sourced from literature related to the problem of meaning contained through several data sources so that it can answer the implementation of Ibn Miskawaih's ethical thought and self-meaning in the social environment. The approach used is a critical historical approach, which is an approach that will discuss the ideas of figures from their historical roots, the causes of their existence and their relationship with the reality that existed at that time, which is then critically analyzed starting from the background, including separating the reality and his thoughts so that the similarities and differences are found. So that with this, it will later be associated with the current state of self-meaning. In this matter, according to John Barton, there are three important things, namely the origin or background, the meaning of his thoughts, and the construction of the history of his thoughts. and afterwards analyzed based on the implementation of the current state (Barton, 1998).

There are two sources of data used, which include: Primary data from the book *Tahdzib al Akhlaq wa Thathir al A'raq*, Towards Moral Perfection Ibn Miskawaih, and Ibn Miskawaih's Ethics Education Book. The secondary data used are books, journals and all references that support the writing of Ibn Miskawaih's concept of ethical thought and its meaning. The analysis method that will be used in the critical historical method wants to try to describe the theoretical construction of Ibn Miskawaih's ethical concept, then analyzed in depth until the roots of the character's thinking critically so that it can answer

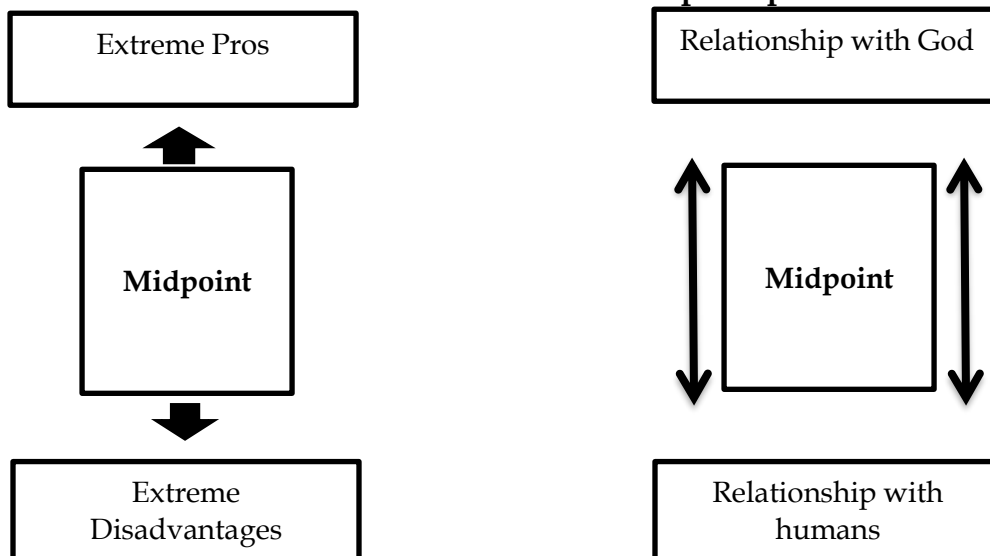
the form of its implementation of self-meaning in the social environment (Sugiyono, 2021).

With this, in this study based on the analysis above, there are certain steps that the author follows. First, choose a figure to be studied, named Ibn Miskawaih, and focus on his ideas about thinking about self-meaning. Second, collect information from books written by Ibn Miskawaih including his works and history and origins. Third, compile important parts of his idea of ethics. Fourth, study and understand how Ibn Miskawaih's ethical theory was arranged. Fifth, think about the good and bad parts of the idea and where it comes from and its implementation of self-meaning in the social environment. Sixth, make a conclusion about the common thread of the above problem formulation related to the implementation of his thinking on self-meaning in the social environment (Abdullah, 2015).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ibn Miskawaih or full name Abu Ali Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ya'kub Ibn Miskawaih is a famous philosopher in Islam and non-Muslims. In Ibn Miskawaih's thought, the concept of ethics is returned to two main things, namely character and fitrah, both of which are obtained from business so that they become habits. The habit referred to here is that it will culminate in the ethics or morals. The main problem of the discussion of ethics and morals is called the middle point. Where at this midpoint later humans will know how to behave and know themselves ethics so that a person is far from the extremes of bad (advantages) and other bad (disadvantages). The following is an overview of the concept map and will be described below.

Table 1. Ibn Miskawaih's Concept Map of Ethics



Ibn Miskawaih's Ethical Thinking through the Concept of the Middle Point

The concept of thought brought by Ibn Miskawaih, in his thinking about ethics, he started by diving into the human soul. He views that the science of the soul has its own virtues compared to other sciences. Humans are not able to attain a knowledge unless they have known the science of the soul beforehand. So that knowing about the states of the soul as the foundation, it is easy to know other sciences so that one has the weapon to see right and wrong in matters of belief and between good and evil. Therefore, Miskawaih's ethical thinking is built on his view of the soul (Ma'ruf, 2000).

Furthermore, Ibn Miskawaih said that virtue is at the midpoint between the two ends, while ugliness is at the end of both ends. Virtue is at the middle point, as indicated by its position between the two vices and the farthest position from the two. Therefore, if the virtue shifts even slightly from its position to a lower position, it will approach one of the insults, and the value of the virtue will diminish according to how close he is to the insult. Not only is it difficult to reach the midpoint, but it is also difficult to maintain it after reaching it.

Ibn Miskawaih based his theory of moral virtue on the position of *al-wasath* (middle) The doctrine of this path has actually been introduced by previous philosophers, such as Plato, Mencius, Aristotle and the Muslim philosopher Al Kindi (Hidayat & Kesuma, 2019). Ibn Miskawaih broadly defined the "middle way", as the extreme position of the advantages and disadvantages of the human soul, which is consistent, moderate, harmonious, primary, and noble. He argues that every virtue has two negative sides: the middle is good, and the negative is bad. The intended middle position is a general principle that applies to everyone, and one virtue, or straight line, is the true middle position. Wisdom is wisdom, "iffah" is purity, "shaja'ah" is courage, and "is" is justice. There are eight bad traits. The details are determined, cowardly, greedy, cruel, gullible, and stupid (Rahmaniyah, 2010).

The middle position is relative, according to Ibn Miskawaih. Reason and religious teachings are the tools used to measure this middle attitude. This middle way theory can be considered as a theory that has a changing and dynamic meaning. Thus, based on the doctrine of the middle way, man will not lose his way in any situation (Hidayat, 1999). Here's an example of the explanation above:

Table 2. Midpoint Theory

Extreme Shortage	Midpoint	Extreme Excess
Stupidity	Wisdom	Impudence
Cowardice	Courage	Recklessness
Cold-hearted	Restrained	Greedy

Persecuted	Justice	Persecution
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The peak of the midpoint is the primacy. According to Ibn Miskawaih, the peak of virtue is to humanize humans, which means to love humans themselves. This means that here in addition to loving oneself in society, he must also love the community or other people so that with this he and others get all the peace and comfort. Hope by loving here to stay away from *uzlah* nature which culminates in arrogance and arrogance. Each priority has two extremities. The middle is the praiseworthy and the extreme is broken. So that the middle position here is a standard or general principle that applies to humans. This true middle position is said to be virtue (*al fadilah*) (Nata, 2003). An example is that humans are obliged to love their God, but loving humans is a form of *fadilah* itself or has its own virtues.

The Implementation of Self-Meaning in Ibn Miskawaih's Ethical Thought

According to Ibn Miskawaih, he will always miss the happiness of the soul. Therefore, in order to obtain happiness through the soul, humans can change their behavior for good (Hidayat, 1999). In other words, according to the ethics of Ibn Miskawaih, to achieve perfect happiness, one must be based on nature. Since he started by diving into the human psyche, he believed that the science of the soul was the best of all the sciences. Here, soul means that one should strive to cleanse one's heart and behavior with the intention of becoming a good person. Several things touch the soul and heart such as: Practice not to indulge in lust and anger, pay attention to all actions and plans that will be carried out so that there is not the slightest haram in the body, prepare yourself to face the enemy from within (greed, anger, or anything that hinders the cleanliness of the soul), do not associate with people who are too greedy for the world and only like pleasure, oing activities that can bring oneself closer to Allah or goodness, not living excessively so that even if one has advantages and always introspecting oneself every day After doing this, one can enter the three main bases of Ibn Miskawaih's ethics.

First, regarding the implementation of self-meaning, a person in addition to doing things related to himself to always benefit such as eating healthy food, maintaining sports, but the most important thing in this case is related to humanity. Where one must help other human beings more by helping each other in kindness, either in the form of giving money assistance, easing the burden of other people's difficulties, helping people who have fallen, etc. Second, about happiness. Where in the meaning of oneself, a person does not need to struggle and focus too much on pursuing the happiness of meters or money, but rather pursuing the spiritual happiness that he can feel. This means that a person in this case must carry out activities that will make the heart comfortable and also not bear

the burden such as worshipping, helping others and working adequately so that later things of worship, family and others will also be carried out well. Because this happiness is more important than material things that sometimes lead to bad things such as corruption. Third, *fadilah* or virtue. The meaning of self can be that we can help others, deliberation, discussion, mutual cooperation so that doing good is easy to do. When the above three bases have been performed, then the state of the soul that performs actions without thought and contemplation will later reach the peak of ethics from Ibn Miskawaih. So that people who do these good deeds without being asked and thinking will definitely do these good deeds.

In addition, several things that are also related to the above are related to the implementation of needs in daily life in maintaining the soul and heart. Where in this case, the self-meaning that can be done is divided into three main points, namely: 1) things about the needs of the body (for example, eating halal food, praying, fasting, almsgiving), 2) things related to the soul (having the right understanding of the faith, obeying Allah, having the motivation to be happy with knowledge and goodness), 3) things related to humans (for example, the science of *muamalah*, marriage to control lust, advise each other and help each other). The three things above also need to be watched out for to reach the peak of Ibn Miskawaih's ethics.

Table 3. Self-Meaning Serves the Soul and Heart

The necessities of life	Maintain halal and good food and drink, perform prayers, fasting, alms etc.
Soul Needs	Have a true and strong creed according to religious foundations, feel Allah, have a strong motivation about learning knowledge and applying it.
The Need for Human Relationships	Muamalah and social sciences such as mutual aid and trade, conducting marriage in accordance with Shari'a, advising each other in good and avoiding bad etc.

Another self-meaning is that a person must be based on the middle way theory. Where when one is based on this middle way theory, the ethics produced are far from extreme disadvantages or extreme advantages, both of which are a form of badness (Asy'ari, 1999a). For example, the nature of shyness, where when a person wants to have the nature of shame, then he should not be a shy person who does not dare to do

something good. However, on the other hand, he should also not feel fearful, which means that he is too brave without looking at the existing conditions. To be clearer, it is said that a student is sent to the house, that is, when he meets a student, he lowers his head, not that he is pedeanism by walking more stylishly because there are students because this is an excessive form of extreme.

Table 4. Implementation of Self-Meaning in Ibn Miskawaih ethics in life

Extreme Disadvantages	Midpoint	Extreme Overload
Shy (fearful)	Shame	Pedeanism
Unhelpful	Please Help sincerely	Please Help is not sincere
Depend on others	Self-sufficient	Independent Excess (no need for others)
Lie	Honest	Plain

From some of the examples above, it is termed that if a person wants to be a good person, then he must not go out of the middle point that has become a benchmark and must not be deficient or reprehensible (excess).

Analysis of the Implementation of Ibn Miskawaih's Ethical Thought on Self-Meaning in the Social Environment

In the history of his life journey, it is found in his biography that Ibn Miskawaih had a great influence in the Rayy area. He devoted the last years of his life to the study and writing of disciplines including medicine, language, history and philosophy (Rizih, 2017). However, of the many, he is more popular as a moral philosopher than as a divine philosopher. This is motivated by the chaotic situation of the social community in the area and surrounding areas as a result of liquor, adultery, glamour living, and others. Therefore, he is interested in focusing on the field of ethics rather than others, making him famous as a moral philosopher or known as ethics because he wants to change the way people see things. Therefore, in his mind, a person should not have bad qualities, but must have good qualities so as to achieve happiness. And this happiness is also obtained if he does not have a deficiency or excessive nature because it is part of the negative towards the world of his social environment.

Ibn Miskawaih's ethical thought is different from the ethical thought of several other philosophers, including the west. For example, Plato defines *budi* as the determination of goals and ethical values. To achieve good and avoid evil, one must go through his thoughts. From the beginning, the soul functions as a link between the world of birth (body) and the world of ideas. The more knowledge and understanding that

arises, the more types of concepts that emerge. In addition, Plato said that the pleasure of life is obtained through an understanding of the intended value, which is good for society and good for the person, not by fulfilling worldly desires as is the case with the theory of hedonism. The interests of individuals and society must be in line (Hatta, 2006).

His disciple Aristotle also stated that many people lose their ethics by doing something narrow because the main goal is good and satisfying. For example, there is no point in producing or buying more shoes than they can wear. This is self-evident. But that doesn't mean that money collected without limits and can be exchanged for everything is also a better thing. Because according to him, better things are things that benefit him and others more. so that human beings who focus on satisfying themselves are a form of harm to the community and themselves because, by concentrating on narrow goals, they deprive their soul and spirit of a greater and more beneficial experience for themselves and their social environment. Therefore, ethics in other human beings and respect for themselves is more important than satisfying themselves excessively.

The above difference with Ibn Miskawaih is very clear, where if Ibn Miskawaih points on the science of the soul and the theory of the middle way, then Plato points on the ideas in the brain and Aristotle points on the usefulness for others and himself. Likewise, the concept of happiness if Ibn Miskawaih is based on divinity (achievement of God) so that without knowing God and being close to God, it seems that he will not feel that happiness, and Plato and Aristotle are based on the interests of society, which means that when a person is able to make people smile from their sadness and cry so that they smile, then that is what is said to have reached the level of happiness. However, the thing in common is that it is basically mandatory to become a human being and dive into one's own soul to do good to oneself, his social environment and his god.

Meanwhile, if distinguished from Muslim figures who were also born in the same city (Rayy), namely ar-Razi (Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Zakaria ar-Razi) also have differences and similarities. The difference is that if Ibn Miskawaih in knowing good and bad and happiness is based on the middle and divine paths, then ar-Razi knows good and bad is based on reason, even without the guidance of revelation and the apostle it can be so that he is known as a true rationalist (Hamdani, 2020). In addition, according to ar-Razi, happiness is the return of what has been eliminated because of something dangerous. According to him, love, carelessness and pride are something that is condemned because it hinders happiness because it causes excessive lust and prevents people from working better and learning more (Nasution, 2005). And this is also different, because Ibn Miskawaih never cursed above, but gave a limit and a benchmark based on the middle way, but if it is less and excessive, it will certainly not achieve that level.

Its implementation in terms of the social environment, if a person has been able to do well, about the self-meaning of ethics which includes good, bad, wealth and middle ground, then the resulting impact if done continuously is that life will always promote goodness and be able to feel happiness in his soul and socially. We can see this from the discussion above, where if a person gets used to practicing to be better, starting from small affairs to big problems, then by changing his habits from liking bad things to being a good person, it will make him a good person and character. Likewise, if he has reached the habit of doing good in the future, he will have a happy impact on his life, so that his social life and worship activities are carried out calmly. And this is also, if a person practices the middle way of goodness, then he will also easily avoid the nature of shortcomings that make him always do good, and also not reach extreme extremes, let alone blame anyone who is different from him as the cases that are viral in the background phenomenon of this research.

Likewise when in society, because his soul has become a good person, he will have more impact on society. For example, he has never been close to each other, so because he is used to the position of giving alms, he is not lazy and always tries to give alms and help people who need him regardless of the difference. For example, in building an activity, he will dare to appear more in front of the community and also continue to prioritize togetherness rather than personal selfishness from his own opinion. And that is one of the contributions of Ibn Miskawaih's thought that can be made to self-meaning in the social environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, it is concluded that Ibn Miskawaih looked at the middle position in a person's attitude. Where a person should not be extremely deficient or extreme excessive because it will have a negative impact on himself and his social environment. It must be the extreme middle or middle position which is said to be the right goodness and must be used as the foundation for the individual. The peak of the middle position is the virtue as for example man is obliged to love his God, but loving man is a form of *fadhilah* himself so that he does not easily express hostility to others, especially those who are different from him. The implementation of self-meaning in the social environment can start from diving into the soul by staying away from excessive love for the world and the impurities of the heart, then after doing the habit of doing good in daily life, a person will be able to do gradually about giving importance to human beings more importantly by not harming humans. The peak of this ethical self-meaning after doing good continuously, then later he will always do good without having to think about it and also be commanded, meaning that he will definitely do it without thinking

long so that that the kindness can bring him peace of mind and also calmness to help anything related to his social life.

This research provides insight into the contribution of Ibn Miskawaih's thought in self-meaning in the social environment so that a person who easily blames himself, or who easily blames others can be overcome by learning from his thoughts. So that in his life a person will be calmer and appreciate something more without thinking so that it becomes a habit of doing good continuously. The limitations of this research paper do not discuss the details of Ibn Miskawaih's ethics to a figure or institution. The suggestion that can be developed in this study is that it is hoped that other researchers can try to discuss the concept of ethics in practice in certain institutions or figures, and also developed by using the focus of discussion that is studied by quantitative research.

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