



# Entrepreneurial Characters from the Great Man: Microhistory Study of the Prophet Muhammad

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**Abstract.** Prophet Muhammad leads the world's most influential figure in the world as western writers determined beside the great figure of religion. In the 21st century, Prophet Muhammad deserves to become a figure with entrepreneurial characters. Through the study of microhistory, the stories of Prophet Muhammad were identified, classified, and interpreted as stories that contain the values of an entrepreneur character. The results from a study of several biographical books of Prophet Muhammad found that four stories constantly experienced by the Prophet Muhammad such as: business, failure, suffering, and success. Then, these four stories were interpreted into four entrepreneurial characters of Prophet Muhammad, namely: creative, brave, survival, and independent. These values were universal and can be taught for historical learning across cultures, religions, and generations.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Characters · Microhistory Study · Prophet Muhammad

## 1 Introduction

Entrepreneurship is recognized as one of the dominant factors in the economy of modern society [1]. Today, the existence of entrepreneurs in a country is very essential because entrepreneurs can be relied on to maintain economic growth and contribute to global competition by creating many jobs for laborers in a country [2, 3]. Their existence is also like a savior [4, 5] due to their contribution in bringing growth opportunities to their countries. Therefore, now, great people are valued as people with entrepreneurial characters but the appreciation for historical figures from millennials should not fade away. The great figures from the past must be presented as figures of entrepreneurial character, so that respect for the great historical figures keeps being maintained.

Moreover, everyone is an entrepreneur because everyone wants to solve their problems in life [6]. But, in fact, teachers still orient themselves to economic activities based on a survey conducted in Bandung that is limited to only history teachers from West Java in 2020. A questionnaire about the entrepreneurial character was proposed to those history teachers and the results showed that 60% of teachers' understanding still focused on economic activities. To bridge this gap, a concept of entrepreneurial character should

be figured out based on a historical point of view. Despite many studies on various characters in the history lesson, the entrepreneurial character still has been less investigated in history learning. This study will focus on the historical figures that showed the values of entrepreneurial character. The current study will answer two different questions. First, which historical stories of great figures can be categorized as entrepreneurial characters? Second, what entrepreneurial character values can be imitated from the life stories of great historical figures?

People with entrepreneurial characters are described as reliable skilled workers [3]. It is also called a general talent [7]. The characteristics of people with entrepreneurial character are having survival ability, independence, higher achievement orientation, and effort appreciation [8]. In companies, successful leaders have many times of crisis throughout their careers [9]. Entrepreneur character is a combination of personality and behaviour in which knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personality qualities are the manifestation of it [10]. The entrepreneurial character is related to the strategies and life journey that becomes a valuable legacy in someone's life journey [8, 11].

The idiom "The past survives in the present" means all human activities in the past are creative activities [12]. Now, these past creative activities are redefined as cognitive creative activities [13]. Historical facts are explained based on the information of historians' memories (memohistory). Someone's memories are influenced by various backgrounds including the era that becomes someone's memory patterns and cultures [14, 15]. The past will not be a fact of reality without any interactions of creativity and imagination. The past is not a material reality for any form of interaction with the past. Those forms of interactions are historians' creative works and imagination [16]. The creativity of historians becomes a historical fact that entrepreneurial character can be explored and created by historians from historical facts.

A figure is built from a series of problems that had been through in the past [8, 11]. All information in Qur'an is interconnected among letters and letters, verses and verses, and before and after a verse. Not only letters and verses but also their sentences that associate one another, including pairing sentences, sequential sentences, or opposite sentences [17]. That information will be related to similar problems.

Four success stories can be revealed by connecting the concept of changing the situation, immorality, difficulty, and convenience in Surah Ar-Ra'd verse 11 and Alam Nasyrah verse 5 to 6.

*"For him [i.e., each one] is successive [angels] before and behind him who protect him by the decree of Allah. Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves. And when Allah intends for a people ill, there is no repelling it. And there is not for them besides Him any patron" (Q.13.:11).*

*"For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease (verse 5); Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease (verse 6). (Q.5-6).*

The evidence of the interconnected concept in Al-Qur'an can be examined logically and empirically from the historical facts because the past is still alive until now [12].

Humans cannot change the limit of situations and go beyond those limits as the basic situations in human life. Death (*Tod*), suffering (*leiden*), struggle (*kampf*), and mistake

(*schuld*) are those basic situations. First, death is both a threat and an opportunity. It is called a threat because death can take a human's life comfortably. On the other hand, death also allows humans to know life. Next, all kinds of destructive and constructive suffering (illness, tension, despair, slavery, hunger, exile) are life lessons. When someone suffers in life, it is easier to be self-version rather than when in luck. Then, there are two parts of struggles; *dasein* and existence. These two parts then define struggle to be realized and not realized. The struggle for surviving is not realized that everybody does it. In contrast, everybody realizes when they struggle for economy, politics, and war in life. The struggle on the level of existence, the struggle for ideas, goes smoothly, without coercion, and violence. Last, the mistake is the consequence of struggling. Humans will collide with the 4 boundaries of life and this collision will bring humans to transcendence [18, 19].

Historical values are closely related to the stories of entrepreneurs that have been experienced in the past [20–22]. These values motivate a person to be creative, take risks, be innovative, achievement-oriented, ambitious, and independent [23]. Psychologically, 13 values show someone with entrepreneurial character. They are bold, trusted, independent, intuitive, skillful, adaptable, loyal to work when under pressure and persistent, skillful, organizational, collaborative, positive thinking, communicative, and sociable [24].

## 2 Methodology

The Microhistory approach is a biographical study of someone's personal life that is interpreted according to the social, cultural, psychological, political, and economic contexts of daily life either from a micro or macro point of view [25]. This approach can reveal human uniqueness by interpreting the biographical life of figures in a macro so the results can produce a more meaningful understanding and can be a guide [26].

### 2.1 Research Design

A literature study was conducted on several biographical books of great historical figures at the heuristic stage. At the critical stage, the facts of life stories from great historical figures are sorted and categorized based on stories that contain entrepreneurial characters. Those facts are interpreted and generalized into groups of values of entrepreneurial character. Next, they are explained chronologically as a pattern of life journey that contains entrepreneurial character values. Thus, the story of the entrepreneur character is generalized as a character model of entrepreneurs from various backgrounds.

### 2.2 Character Selection

The research object is the biography of the Prophet Muhammad which is categorized as the world's most influential figure from 100 ranked lists of influential figures in the world [27]. Prophet Muhammad also can be said that have received entrepreneurial character from an early age and has become a great entrepreneur among Muslims in history [28].

### 2.3 Data Processing

The process of historical data is carried out in three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion [29]. At the critical stage, the historical facts of the Prophet Muhammad are sorted according to the research objectives. Those facts are categorized based on the four quadrants of success stories; effort, failure, suffering, and success. Those four stories are then interpreted into entrepreneurial character values. Entrepreneur character stories of the Prophet Muhammad were generalized into a historical law, the story of entrepreneurial characters of figures [30].

### 2.4 Data Validity

To test the facts of the Prophet Muhammad as a role model of entrepreneurial character, data triangulation was carried out by comparing the Prophet Muhammad biographies from selected different biographers. The consistency of the Prophet Muhammad personal stories was tested based on four stories of the entrepreneurial character from other biographers' points of view. Four biographies were explored. First, the "History of the Prophet Muhammad's life" by Muhammad Husain Haikal, the 29th edition written in 2003. Second, "Muhammad: The Life of the Prophet from Classical Sources" by Martin Lings, the 7th edition written in 2014. Third, "The History of Muhammad's Life Journey" by Muhammad al-Ghazali, the 4th edition published in 2005. Fourth, the "Biography of Muhammad Rasulullah", by Maulana Muhammad Ali, the 1st edition published in 2015. Last, "Muhammad the Orphan" by Muhammad Samed Said, 1st edition in 2016.

## 3 Result and Discussion

### 3.1 The Stories of Prophet Muhammad's Entrepreneurial Characters

The historical facts of the Prophet Muhammad's entrepreneurial characters were found in a biographical book entitled "History of Muhammad's Life" by Muhammad Husein Haekal that was translated from Arabic into Indonesian by Ali Audah. From 1990 to 2003 this book has been reprinted 29 times. This study analyzed the 29th edition in 2003. As the result, the author considered that this book was the top biography book about the stories of Prophet Muhammad's life journey from the historical point of view. Based on those four entrepreneurial characters, below are the facts of the Prophet Muhammad's life stories, presented in Fig. 1 and Table 1.

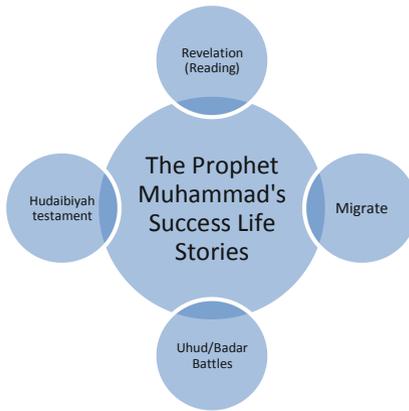
### 3.2 The Entrepreneurial Character Values of Prophet Muhammad Stories

Based on the study of Prophet Muhammad's life stories, the author found a model of a story from someone who had entrepreneurial characters which were built from four stories of efforts, failures, suffering, and success [31]. Jasper [18] argued that humans cannot go beyond the "boundaries of situations" (*grandsituationen*) and cannot change it as basic situations in human life. Those situations are death (*Tod*), suffering (*leiden*), struggle (*kampf*), and mistake (*schuld*) are those basic situations. First, death is both a threat and an opportunity. It is called a threat because death can take a human's life

**Table 1.** Four Stories of Prophet Muhammad’s Entrepreneurial Characters as a Role Model

	Entrepreneurial Characters	Historical Facts
Effort	The ability to read and find ideas in achieving life goals (CREATIVE)	Prophet Muhammad as readers and decision-makers based on the biographies
Failure	The ability to take risks in life difficulties and limitation (Brave)	The reality that happened in Prophet Muhammad’s were out of expectation
Suffering	The ability to survive infrequent failures (SURVIVAL)	Prophet Muhammad suffered in the extreme situation of life
Success	The ability to be independent of any pressures in life and be dependent on others. (INDEPENDENT)	Prophet Muhammad got success from failures that had been through at the previous time

Source: Author Analysis, 2020



**Fig. 1.** The Prophet Muhammad’s Life Stories

comfortably. On the other hand, death also allows humans to know life. Next, all kinds of destructive and constructive suffering (illness, tension, despair, slavery, hunger, exile) are life lessons. When someone suffers in life, it is easier to be self-version rather than when in luck. Then, there are two parts of struggles; dasein and existence. These two parts then define struggle to be realized and not realized. The struggle for surviving is not realized that everybody does it. In contrast, everybody realizes when they struggle for economy, politics, and war in life. The struggle on the level of existence, the struggle for ideas, goes smoothly, without coercion, and violence. Last, the mistake is the consequence of struggling. Humans will collide with the 4 boundaries of life and this collision will bring humans to transcendence [19].

## 4 Conclusion

The great historical figures in the past can be figured out now as entrepreneurial figures. This microhistory study of Prophet Muhammad revealed four entrepreneurial characters of Prophet Muhammad's life stories: effort, failure, suffering, and success. Those four stories then showed the determination of entrepreneurial characters that showed Prophet Muhammad as creatively searching for a business opportunity to achieve life goals, bravely taking risks, not fearing failure, surviving even in extreme conditions, and depending on people in terms of being able to socialite to others. Prophet Muhammad's entrepreneurial character also has a strong belief in God that gives impact to always be an optimist because Prophet Muhammad always thinks positively to every moment of life. Then, the life goals of Prophet Muhammad always bring peace and prosperity to others. Lastly, those four stories can be presented as historical historiography of great historical figures for further research of entrepreneurial characters in education.

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