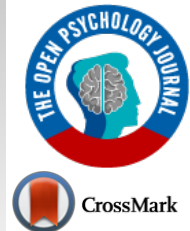




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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### Encouraging the Rise of Young Entrepreneurs: Promoting Entrepreneurial Intention through Storytelling

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#### Abstract:

#### Aim:

The aim of this study is to use storytelling as a technique to develop entrepreneurial intention in Islamic boarding school graduates.

#### Background:

Most of the *pesantren* graduates in Indonesia do not proceed on to university studies after completing their schooling due to financial problems and so lack the skills to work on jobs that could support their livelihood. Therefore, *pesantren* wanted to develop a strategy to help its alumni find employment after completing their education. Increasing the entrepreneurial intention of graduates in various sectors is one way in which *pesantren* expect to support graduates in finding their livelihood.

#### Objective:

The objective of this study is to test the effectiveness of storytelling in increasing entrepreneurial intentions in students.

#### Methods:

Sixty Islamic boarding school students participated in this study. The Solomon three-group design was used to test the effectiveness of storytelling in increasing the entrepreneurial intentions of students. Participants were divided into three groups: the experimental group, control group 1, and control group 2, each consisting of 20 students. The entrepreneurial-intention scale was used to measure the level of entrepreneurial intention among each group of students.

#### Results

First, there was a significant difference between the post-test score of entrepreneurial intention in the experimental group (with treatment) and the post-test score of entrepreneurial intention in control group 1 (without treatment). Second, the post-test score of entrepreneurial intention in the experimental group (with treatment) was not different from the post-test score of entrepreneurial intention in control group 2 (with treatment). Thus, the results were consistent in the sense that the group that received treatment had an increased level of entrepreneurial intention when compared with the group that did not receive any treatment.

#### Conclusion:

The results showed that storytelling was effective in increasing the entrepreneurial intention of students. In this study, the treatment of storytelling was integrated with a focus group discussion. Developing treatment with other techniques can have a greater effect on increasing the entrepreneurial intention of students.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial intention, Storytelling, Santri, Livelihood, Treatment, Experimental group.

#### Article History

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

*Pondok pesantren* or *pesantren* is an Islamic boarding school situated in Indonesia [1]. In countries such as Malaysia and Southern Thailand, *pondok pesantren* is called “*sekolah*

*pondok*”, while in India and Pakistan, it is called “*Madrasah Islamia*” [2]. Based on the scientific learning model, Islamic boarding schools can be divided into two categories: 1) *salaf* (traditional), that is, Islamic boarding schools that focus on

teaching Islamic science from classical books written by Islamic scholars (*ulamaa*) without integrating them with general scientific studies and 2) *kholaf* (modern), that is, Islamic boarding schools that teach Islamic science in combination with general science [3].

In recent years, the number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia has grown rapidly. In 2020, there were 28,194 *pesantren* educating more than 5 million students. The large number of graduates from the *pesantren* provide great potential to support national development programs. However, *pesantren* alumni are largely unskilled, which makes it difficult for them to secure employment. Most of the alumni rely only on the knowledge that they gain from the *pesantren* to secure jobs as teachers. However, due to the limited job vacancies available in teaching, many *pesantren* alumni remain unemployed [4]. Badruzaman [5] added that Islamic boarding school alumni are one of the major populations facing unemployment as they lack the skills required to take on jobs.

Research conducted by Widodo [6] in Bangkalan, Madura, shows that 55% of students show a low level of innovative spirit while 29% show a moderate level and 14% show a high level. Although *pesantren* graduates have sufficient mastery of religious knowledge to deliver *da'wah*, they possess poor knowledge of life skills. Most of the graduates who are not absorbed into the workforce as teachers by their own institutions end up remaining unemployed. Therefore, it is important for *pesantren* students to acquire life skills along with religious knowledge so that they can develop alternative livelihoods if they cannot become teachers. One such useful life skill that could support them is entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurial intention is the process of developing an interest or motivation to start and run a business [7]. The development of entrepreneurial intention in students will help bring about better readiness and progress towards entrepreneurship. Krueger and Carsrud [8] argue that the intention of entrepreneurship is a strong predictor for entrepreneurial actors. Developing entrepreneurial intentions can help in gauging the students' interest in entrepreneurship and identifying individuals who have the potential to become entrepreneurs [9].

Entrepreneurial intention is not born from coincidence; rather, it occurs by design. Saeid Karimi *et al.* [10] found that entrepreneurial intentions are born from deliberate and previously planned behaviour both by oneself and others. Individuals can develop their own entrepreneurial intentions through self-efforts, such as reading up on information, developing imagination, and analysing situations [11]. Other people can also improve the entrepreneurial intentions of individuals through entrepreneurship coaching, systematic and programmed training, and storytelling [12]. Indarti and Kristiansen [13] explained that entrepreneurial intention is formed through three stages: motivation, belief, and skill and competence. Everyone has the drive to succeed in life. The higher the need for achievement, the greater will be the indivi-

dual's efforts to achieve it. Individuals' confidence in their skills and competencies will further strengthen their motivation to succeed. Thus, the integration of belief, motivation, skill, and competence will help improve entrepreneurial intention.

In Indonesian culture, storytelling is an oral culture that is commonly practised within society [14]. Storytelling is an activity of sharing knowledge and experiences through narratives and anecdotes to communicate lessons, ideas, concepts, and causal relationships [15]. Serrat [16] defines storytelling as a clear description of ideas, beliefs, experiences, and life lessons through stories or narratives that can increase insight and evoke emotions. Stories are usually conveyed by parents to their children, by adults to younger people, and also by teachers to their students [17]. Storytelling can have a strong influence on the attitudes and behaviour of listeners. Burns [18] states that stories can have a lasting effect on listeners and can affect their way of thinking, change their attitude and behaviour, foster discipline, evoke emotions, and provide inspiration.

Storytelling about successful entrepreneurs can bring inspiration to students. It will also help them develop enthusiasm and passion for entrepreneurship. In other words, their entrepreneurial intention will increase. After their entrepreneurial intention is fostered, students can develop their interest further by looking for literature to deepen their understanding, joining the entrepreneurial community, and exchanging information with other students about the world of entrepreneurship. This study aims to examine whether telling inspirational stories about successful entrepreneurs can increase entrepreneurial intention in students.

**2. METHODS**

The Solomon three-group design was used to conduct this study. The participants were divided into three groups: an experiment group and two control groups [19]. All group members were selected randomly. The Solomon three-group design that was used in the study is given below in Table 1.

**Table 1. The Solomon three-group design.**

Random Assignment	Groups	Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-Test
R	Experimental group (EG)	01	(X)	02
R	Control group 1 (CG1)	01	(-)	02
R	Control group 2 (CG2)		(X)	02

Note: R: Random assignment; (X): Treatment; (-): No treatment.

The Experimental Group (EG) was put through the pre-test and post-test with treatment. The first Control Group (CG1) was given pre-test and post-test without treatment. The second Control Group (CG2) was given a post-test after treatment but did not have a pre-test. The effect of the intervention was assessed by comparing the post-test scores of the three groups. If the post-test score of the EG was higher than that of CG1, it would indicate that the treatment was effective in increasing entrepreneurial intention. Similarly, if there was no difference between the post-test score of the EG and that of CG2, it could

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be inferred that the treatment was effective.

**2.1. Participants**

A total of 60 students participated in this study (aged 17–18 years old), of whom 31 were men (51.67%) and 29 were women (48.33%). The selection criteria were that the participants should not have any plans to continue their studies in universities and should have no interest in the field of business. Participants were interviewed directly to find out whether they met these two criteria. Selected participants were then asked to fill out an informed consent form, which stated that they were willing to participate in the entire research process until it was completed. All participants were equally divided into three groups: EG, CG1, and CG2, each having a strength of 20 students.

**2.2. Instruments Used**

The study used the Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ) developed by Linan and Chen (2009). The EIQ is an English questionnaire used to measure a person’s level of interest in entrepreneurship. In this study, the EIQ was translated into Indonesian, and five choices were given for each question: Strongly Agree, Agree, Doubt, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The completed questionnaires were translated back into English for evaluation. Back-translation refers to taking a questionnaire from a foreign language, translating it into another language, using it to conduct a study, and then translating the results back again into the original language for further analysis [19].

In this study, the EIQ was used to gauge the entrepreneurial intentions of students in *pondok pesantren*. The validity test used expert judgment, and the reliability test used the kappa coefficient of Cohen, with a coefficient of 0.8. The instrument consisted of three components: attitude towards behaviour (personal attraction), perceived social norms, and Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC). Higher EIQ test scores indicated higher levels of entrepreneurial intention, and vice versa.

The research used a story of a successful entrepreneurial role model. Participants in the EG and CG2 together narrated a story taken from the film *Billionaire Top Secret Tao Kae Noi*, while CG1 did not get any treatment. The story was delivered to both the EG and CG2 groups orally in 45 minutes, with the support of LCD-projected media. After the storytelling was completed, the researcher divided the participants into their respective groups (EG and CG2) and then asked them to discuss the story that they just heard. The discussion questions were the following: 1) What did the participants think about the story? 2) How did the participants feel after listening to the story? And 3) How did the participants plan to undertake their careers after completing the study?

**2.3. Research Procedures**

This research was conducted in four Phases, Spread out over four Days

1) On the first day, participants were asked to fill out an informed consent form. Through this form, participants

consented to participate in the research and abide by the terms of the contract. Initially, 93 people showed interest to take part in this experiment. Out of these, the researchers selected 60 students who were not planning to continue their studies at universities and had no interest in entrepreneurship.

2) On the second day, participants in the EG and CG1 were asked to fill out the EIQ as a pre-test. Participants completed the EIQ in about 30 minutes. After this, they were given a briefing to prepare for the next-day treatment.

3) On the third day, the storytelling treatment was given to 20 people in the EG and 20 people in CG2. Participants in CG1 were not given any treatment; instead, they were given activities that were not related to the treatment. Three types of tasks were conducted during the treatment: storytelling about young people who have succeeded in entrepreneurship, resuming the stories, and discussing the stories within the groups (FGD).

4) On the fourth day, a post-test was carried out on all the groups (EG, CG1, and CG2).

**2.4. Data Analysis**

A paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test were used to analyse the effectiveness of the storytelling treatment in improving entrepreneurial intentions in the students of the *pondok pesantren*. Before these tests, two prerequisite tests, namely, the normality test with Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Levene’s test for equality, were conducted. The data analysis was carried out using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 24 (Fig. 1).

**3. RESULTS**

The results of this study were primarily used to determine the effectiveness of the storytelling treatment in increasing entrepreneurial intentions in students. Data analysis was conducted using paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test. The paired sample t-test was used to determine whether the level of entrepreneurial intention between the EG and CG1 showed a significant difference. As shown in Table 2, the t-test score of EG was -6.366 and was significant at p-value less than 0.05. There was a difference found between the mean score of the pre-test (59.50) and the mean score of the post-test (70.25).

**Table 2. Examination of entrepreneurial intentions in EG and CG1 students.**

Groups	Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig.
	Mean Pre-Test	Mean Post-Test	Mean Distance	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean			
Paired EG pre-post	59.50	70.25	-10.75	7.552	1.688	-6.366	19	0.000
Paired CG1 pre-post	59.55	61.65	-2.10	4.833	1.080	-1.943	19	0.067

Paired sample t-test analysis of CG1 showed that the difference between the pre-test and post-test of CG1 was not significant (t = -1.943, p > 0.05). Thus, the results indicated that without treatment, the participants’ entrepreneurial

intentions did not change. In other words, the treatment was found to be effective in increasing entrepreneurial intentions in students (Fig. 1).

The complete differences in the test results between EG and CG1 are presented in Table 2 below.

In the Solomon three-group design, CG2 was used to confirm the comparative results between the post-test scores of the EG and CG1 and also to confirm that the treatment was effective. The objective was to determine whether the

entrepreneurial intention was influenced only by the treatment and not by other factors. In this study, the post-test score of CG1 was compared with that of CG2. As previously explained, CG1 did not receive any treatment while CG2 received storytelling treatment. If the post-test score of CG2 was found to be higher than the post-test score of CG1, it could be inferred that the increase in entrepreneurial intention is due to the treatment (in other words, the treatment is effective) (Fig. 3).

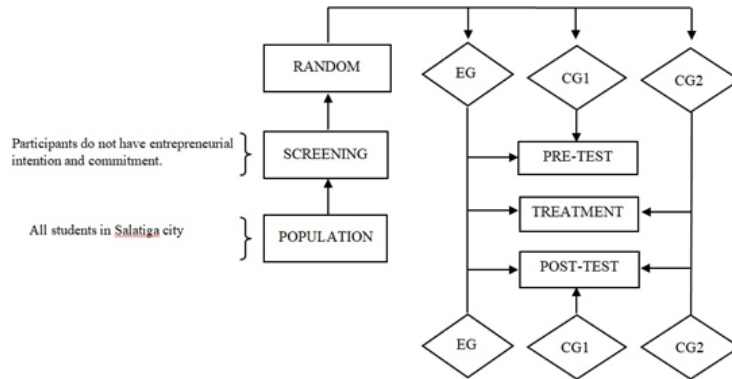


Fig. (1). Research procedure [19].

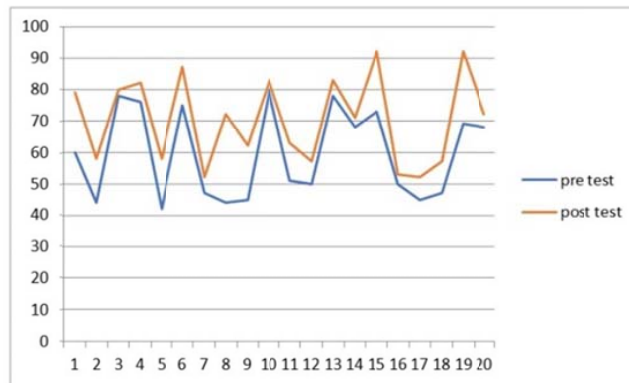


Fig. (2). Comparison between pre-test and post-test scores of EG.

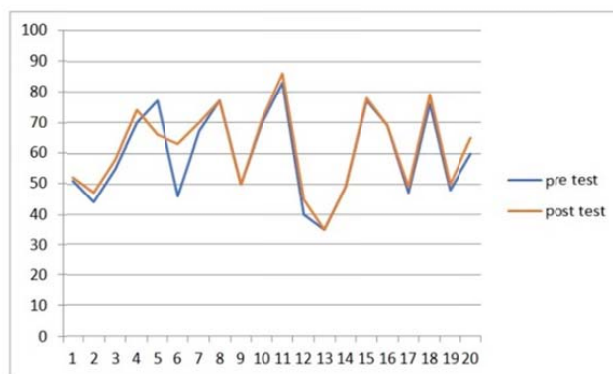


Fig. (3). Comparison between pre-test and post-test scores of CG1.

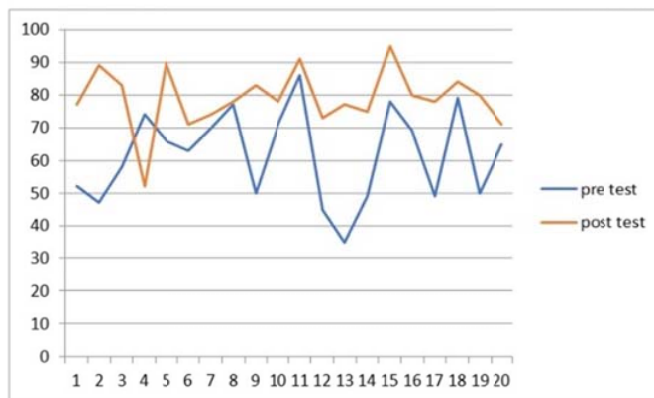


Fig. (4). Comparison between pre-test and post-test scores of CG2.

The results of the independent sample t-test of CG1 and CG2 are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Independent sample t-test of CG1 and CG2.

Groups	Mean Distance	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean	t	df	Sig.
Independent CG1 and CG2 (post-test only)	-17.30	15.84	3.54	-4.884	19	0.000

Based on the results of the independent sample t-test, the following inferences were made: the t-test score was -4.884, which was significant at p-value less than 0.05, and the degree was 19, greater than the score of the t-test. The post-test score of CG2 was higher than the post-test score of CG1, with a mean distance of -17.30. Thus, there was a difference between the post-test scores of CG1 and CG2. These results confirm the previous findings (Table 2) that the treatment was effective (Fig. 4).

Meanwhile, based on paired sample t-test, the comparison of the pre-test and post-test scores of EG obtained a t score of -4.798 at the significance level of p less than 0.05. A comparison of pre-test and post-test scores of CG1 obtained a t score of -0.120 at the significance level of p greater than 0.05. The comparison of pre-test and post-test scores of CG2 obtained a t score of -2.689, which was at the significance level of p less than 0.05. These results further strengthen the findings that there exists a significant difference between the participants who received treatment and those who did not receive any treatment. Participants who received treatment displayed higher levels of entrepreneurial intentions than participants who did not. The summary of paired t-test results is given in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Summary of paired t-test results.

No.	Group	Mean Pre-Test	Mean Post-Test	t	Sig.
1	EG pre-post		47.75	-4.798	0.000
2	CG1 pre-post	29.19	31.81	-0.120	0.906
3	CG1 post-CG2 post	31.50	48.60	-2.689	0.018

The data presented in Table 4 provides a summary of all the results of the data analysis. At a significance level of p less than 0.05, it indicates that after receiving treatment, participants of EG and CG2 showed an increase in entrepreneurial intentions. So, it can be concluded that the storytelling treatment was effective in increasing entrepreneurial intentions in students.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, called “*pesantren*”, are educational institutions that teach Islamic religious lessons to students [20]. People who study in these schools are called “*santri*”. In modern Islamic boarding schools, apart from Islamic religious lessons, the *santri* are also taught general subjects, such as mathematics and science. After completing their studies at *pesantren*, some *santri* continue university studies while most others take up jobs that require low skills. This is because while studying at the *pesantren*, the *santri* are not equipped with the skills that they will need to work.

This research was mainly conducted for the benefit of the *santri* who cannot continue higher education after school. Such *santri* need to specialise in at least one area of expertise in order to be able to earn their livelihoods. One such life skill is entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship does not require any formal education; adequate knowledge on the subject is enough for an individual to carry out a business successfully. In order to develop their entrepreneurial skills, *santri* must have an interest in understanding entrepreneurial activities [21]. This interest is termed entrepreneurial intention [22, 23]. The development of entrepreneurial intention is important not only to help entrepreneurial students but also to produce successful young entrepreneurs [24]. Linan and Chen [25] emphasised that the existence of qualified entrepreneurs in a country is determined by the number of students who are interested in becoming entrepreneurs.

The results of this study show that narrating the success stories of young entrepreneurs can increase entrepreneurial intentions in students. Several previous findings support the results of this study. Some of these supporting findings are the following: (1) storytelling can form identities and lead to action [26]; (2) it can become a trigger to evoke someone’s interest in entrepreneurship [27]; and (3) it can encourage individuals to

compete in entrepreneurship [28]. Listening to stories of successful entrepreneurs increases a person's desire to become an entrepreneur [29]. It not only creates a desire to become successful like the characters in the stories but also motivates learners to take innovative actions to solve problems in new ways [30] and, at the same time, generate new business ideas [31].

Liu, Ma, and Li [24] reinforced the findings of this study with the argument that both success stories and failure stories can increase entrepreneurial intentions. How do the two different types of stories increase entrepreneurial intentions? According to the findings of this study, the key takeaway lies in the meaning of the story [32]. In this study, after the participants listened to an entrepreneur's story, they were divided into four groups, each group consisting of ten people and guided by one facilitator. Within these groups, they discussed the values that can be drawn from the story. The facilitator also provided them with insights on the values of entrepreneurship and the potential for the participants to become entrepreneurs. In the theory of planned behaviour, Ajzen [33] stated that a person's behaviour is influenced by the intention (behaviour intention) of a certain behaviour (in this case, entrepreneurship). The intention to behave is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and PBC. These three factors influence people's behaviour and give them the impetus to behave in a certain way.

These findings are in line with some previous studies, and this study does not appear to have any new findings. However, these findings have opened new insights for the *pesantren* management and students regarding the importance of storytelling about successful entrepreneurs in order to increase the entrepreneurial intentions of students. So far, the *pesantren* have only been oriented to the development of religious knowledge and paid less attention to life skills.

## CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurship is not an innate talent but a skill that can be acquired through education or training. Entrepreneurial intentions can be fostered in young minds in various ways, one of which is storytelling. The results of this study indicate that storytelling, which is strengthened by meaning, can be effective in promoting entrepreneurial intentions in students. Storytelling is essentially a trigger that can prompt listeners to pay attention to the field of entrepreneurship while further interpretation of the stories can provide reinforcement and help individuals develop the determination to become successful entrepreneurs. This research raises several implications, including the following: it is proved that storytelling increases entrepreneurial intention, and empirically, there is an increase in entrepreneurial intention among participants. Based on the results, the *pesantren* management needs to include entrepreneurship programs in the curriculum delivered through the storytelling method and various other proven methods so that *pesantren* graduates will have practical skills as provisions for their self-development. For further research works, the concept of storytelling can be developed in various ways, including the following: retelling the success stories that have been read before, watching inspirational films followed by

explanations and discussions on the stories of films, and listening to the success stories of successful entrepreneurs.

## ETHICS APPROVAL AND CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION

This study was ethically approved and licensed by Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta Research Institute, and the study was conducted according to APA ethical standards.

## HUMAN AND ANIMAL RIGHTS

No animals were used in this research. All human research procedures followed were in accordance with the ethical standards of the committee responsible for human experimentation, and with the Helsinki Declaration of 1975 as revised in 2013.

## CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

Informed consent was obtained from the participants.

## AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

Not applicable.

## FUNDING

None.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors confirmed that the present paper had no conflict of interest.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Declared none.

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