

# Important Entrepreneurial Characteristics to Survive in the Covid-19 Pandemic Era (Case Study on Alumni Business Administration Program of Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia)

Ati Cahayani<sup>1</sup>, Aristo Surya Gunawan<sup>2</sup>

{[ati.cahayani@atmajaya.ac.id](mailto:ati.cahayani@atmajaya.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>, [aristo.surya@atmajaya.ac.id](mailto:aristo.surya@atmajaya.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>}

Business Administration Department, Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia<sup>1,2</sup>

## To cite this document :

Ati Cahayani, & Aristo Surya Gunawan. (2021). Important Entrepreneurial Characteristics to Survive in the Covid-19 Pandemic Era (Case Study on Alumni Business Administration Program of Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia). Conference Series, 3(1), 697-705. <https://doi.org/10.34306/conferenceseries.v3i1.403>

## Abstract

*This Covid-19 pandemic era not only caused problems in the health sector but also in the economic sector. Indonesia's neighbouring country, has entered a recession. We have not yet entered a recession, but it seems unavoidable. One important thing that is expected to support national economic resilience from recession is entrepreneurs, especially the MSMEs entrepreneurs. This study will analyze the essential characteristics possessed by six alumni of the Business Administration Program, Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia, who are MSMEs entrepreneurs. The main concept used in this study is the entrepreneurial characteristics from Longenecker and Hornaday. The research method used is qualitative with descriptive data analysis techniques. Researchers used convenience technique sampling and used the first data source by interviewing informant and secondary data sources about informant business activity. The conclusion from this research is that the six informants have the entrepreneurial characteristics from Longenecker.*

*Keywords: Entrepreneurial Characteristics, MSMEs Entrepreneur Longenecker.*

---

## I. INTRODUCTION

This Covid-19 pandemic era not only caused problems in the health sector but also in the economic field. The latest news informs that Indonesia's neighboring country, Singapore, has experienced a recession in July 2020 [1]. Korea Selatan, Hong Kong, France, Italy, Germany, and even the USA [2] have also reportedly experienced a recession. Although, until now, Indonesia has not experienced a recession, but it seems that economic recession will be unavoidable. From BPS data, it is said that in the 1st quarter of 2020, Indonesia's economic growth was only 2.97% [3].

Meanwhile, BPS data shows that consumption in the 1st quarter of 2020 has been affected by Covid-19. It can be seen that spending or household consumption only grew by 2.84%. Compare this data with the same period last year, which rose 5.02% [4]. This condition is predicted to decrease along with the length of the pandemic.

One important thing that is expected to support national economic resilience from recession in Indonesia is entrepreneurs, especially the MSMEs entrepreneurs. The Indonesian Ministry of Cooperatives and MSMEs noted that in December 2018, the contribution of 60 million MSMEs units to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 60.34 percent and was able to contribute up to 97 percent of the employment to the total national workforce [5]. The data shows that the GDP contributed by MSMEs is more than 50 percent of Indonesia's GDP, not a small amount.

The role of MSMEs in sustaining Indonesia's national economy is increasing because, as we all know, in this pandemic era, many employees are not getting a salary, facing reduced salary, or even being laid off. Based on the Ministry of Manpower Ministry as of May 1st, 2020, the number of formal sector workers that have been laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic has reached 1,032,960 people, and the number of formal and informal sector workers that have been laid off has reached 689,998 people. Thus, formal and informal sector workers affected by COVID-19 are 1,722,958 people [6]. Many employees or workers affected by Covid-19 are "forced" to switch professions to become entrepreneurs because they no longer have a regular income.

It is not easy for people who are used to being employees to become entrepreneurs. There needs to be a mental change for these people, as stated by one businessman named Ipong Sudarsono [7].

However, this condition is also not easy for entrepreneurs who already owned businesses before the pandemic occurred. It is because everyone must tighten their belts, reduce unnecessary spending, and prioritize consumption only for basic needs, given these conditions are feared to last a long time. Specific characteristics are needed for these entrepreneurs to survive in this era of uncertainty.

---

This article will analyse the essential characteristics possessed by entrepreneurs in the Covid-19 pandemic era. This article is expected to provide information for entrepreneurs about the character that is expected to make them survive in a situation like this.

## II. LITERATURE STUDY

### A. Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneur

Entrepreneurship is one of the most important inputs in the economic development of a country [8]. Many people have often expressed the statement because, according to Nishanti, cited from Professor Nathaniel H. Leff, "Entrepreneurship is the capacity for innovation, investment, and expansion in new markets, products, and technique" [9]. From the definition, it is clear that entrepreneurship is the capacity to enter new markets, produce new products, and implement new technologies. It means that entrepreneurship enables the formation of new jobs, which also means it can reduce unemployment.

There is one reasonably complete definition of entrepreneurship. Kuratko, cited from Kuratko and Hodgetts, said about the integrative definition of entrepreneurship: "Entrepreneurship is a dynamic process of vision, change, and creation. It requires an application of energy and passion towards the creation and implementation of new ideas and creative solutions. Essential ingredients include the willingness to take calculated risks, in terms of time, equity, or career; the ability to formulate an effective venture team; the creative skill to marshal the needed resources; the fundamental skill of building a solid business plan; and, finally, the vision to recognize opportunity, where others see chaos, contradiction, and confusion" [10]

Kuratko says that entrepreneurship is a dynamic process that involves vision, change, and creation. Carrying out this process requires energy and a desire to create and implement new ideas and creative solutions. That process is carried out by an entrepreneur. An entrepreneur can be regarded as a person who has the initiative skill and motivation to set up a business or enterprise of his own and always look for high achievements [11].

### B. Entrepreneurial Characteristics

Entrepreneurs have unique characteristics. As quoted by Kuratko and Hodgett, Hornaday said that there are 42 entrepreneurial characteristics [14]. From his research, some entrepreneurial attributes are found. Different from Hornaday's entrepreneurial characteristics, Wickham [15] said that an entrepreneur actually could be considered as a manager, an agent of change, and an individual. Wickham states that an entrepreneur must

have the character associated with his personality as an individual and must have the role of a manager and not be afraid to face change by becoming an agent of change. Meanwhile, Longenecker said, a successful entrepreneur must have four main characteristics: need to be successful, willingness to take risks, confident, strong willingness/motivation [16]. The entrepreneurial characteristics proposed by Longenecker explicitly discuss the characteristics that are important if you want to be a successful entrepreneur.

This article will analyze Longenecker's and Hornaday's entrepreneurial characteristics because researchers feel that the entrepreneurial characteristics of Longenecker and Hornaday are the most appropriately possessed by entrepreneurs in the pandemic era of Covid-19.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this research is a qualitative research method with descriptive data analysis techniques. Descriptive data analysis techniques make the data obtained will be described in detail in order to provide a full understanding of the reader. The population of this research is alumni of the Business Administration Department, Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia, class of 2000-2010.

Informants for this research were six informants that were chosen by purposive and convenience technique sampling. The criteria for purposive sampling are: alumni have been entrepreneurs for at least five years and consist of three male and three female informants. In addition to these criteria, researchers have informants who can be contacted directly for interviews, given the current pandemic conditions, and talkative so that the information obtained can be useful.

The data source used by researchers is the primary data source by interviewing informants and secondary data source about informant business activity.

Operationalization variables for this research are entrepreneurial characteristics from Longenecker and Hornaday, where the 42 Hornaday entrepreneurial characteristics were grouped into 4 main entrepreneurial characteristics of Longenecker as follow:

1. Need to be successful: perseverance, resourcefulness, need to achieve, versatility & knowledge of product; market; machinery; technology, intelligence, accuracy & thoroughness, profit orientation, perceptiveness, efficacy.
2. Willingness to take risks: the ability to take a calculated risk, creativity, ability to influence others, initiative, flexibility, foresight, cooperativeness, imagination, toleration for ambiguity, ability to trust workers,
3. Confident: confidence, ability to get along well with people, independence, responsiveness to suggestions and criticism, dynamism and leadership, ability to

---

make a decision quickly, ability to learn from the mistake, pleasant personality, egotism, courage, aggressiveness, sensitivity to others, honesty & integrity, maturity & balance,

4. Strong willingness/motivation: energy & diligence, optimism, orientation to clear goals, positive response to challenges, time competence & efficiency, responsibility, sense of power, capacity for enjoyment, commitment.

## VI. DATA ANALYSIS

As stated above, this study will interview six informants. Table 1 below illustrates the informant's profile.

These are data analysis related to Longenecker's entrepreneurial character from the six informants:

1. Informant A, who initially became an entrepreneur due to conditions, managed to maintain his business for more than ten years and developed his motorcycle repair business. Informant A did not change the business type during this pandemic era and did not think of closing his business even though his business had decreased. Closing the business would make the mechanics in his workshop lose their income. He is trying to find other income from online sales of motorcycle spare parts, which has been done before the pandemic. Informant A said that even though his income had been decreased, he was sure he could get through this condition.
2. Informant D opened a coffee shop, not because of the pandemic. From the fourth quarter of 2019, informant D has planned to open a coffee shop at the end of March 2020, which turns out to coincide with the occurrence of this pandemic. D's action to keep opening a coffee shop during this pandemic is quite courageous, despite the conditions that require her to stay open because she has already paid for renting the shop and buying coffee shop equipment. At the beginning of his coffee business, informant D only sold coffee by delivery services in the form of bottled coffee. D is also the type of entrepreneur who doesn't want to give up everything to her baristas. Before the coffee shop opened, informant D learned the correct coffee brewing techniques and learned latte art. In managing her coffee shop business, informant D is quite aggressive in making promotions and creating new menus that are quite creative and unique. D is an outgoing person and has many friends, and she collaborates with many of his friends to fill cakes or food at his shop and to do activities at her coffee shop.
3. Informant F did not make changes in her business and even said that the demand for tower cranes increased during the pandemic. But, F limited herself to accept many

- 
- projects because she was worried about her workers' health problems. F felt surprised that the construction business is doing well during this pandemic season, and it made her not need to make many adjustments in her company. In conducting her coffee shop business, similar to what D did, informant F sold bottled coffee when the coffee shop was not allowed to serve dine-in. In her barbershop and coffee shop business, F creates advertisements on social media, informing the public about the actions to maintain cleanliness and health protocols that are carried out in her coffee shop and barbershop.
4. Informant G made several adjustments in the beanbag business, where the shop no longer served direct purchases. Purchases are only made online to reduce health risks and keep the number of buyers from decreasing much. G said that this pandemic condition is like a war with invisible enemies from various sides, and you still have to walk or drown. G stated, there is no other way but to continue to run this business very carefully. In this pandemic era, G had opened PO for cooked food, but it was only done just before the partial lockdown was loosened.
  5. Informant M made a few modifications in his photography business. Usually, pre-wedding photoshoot activities carried out outside the city or even abroad, are now carried out in the study. M also opens PO for cooked food, pork potato chips, although he doesn't leave its primary business. M does not deny that this pandemic has made his business a little bit pause, but he still maintains this business. Until now, he has not had any thoughts of quitting this photography business, a business that started from his hobby.
  6. Informant R did business switching. During the pandemic, where traveling was impossible, R turned her business into a frozen food reseller and all forms of food and some fashion products, such as shorts or hats. This was solely done in order to have an income. The speed at which R changed its business was extraordinary. As if there is no time to lament your fate because it's useless if you just lament your fate without taking real action. Currently, when the partial lockdown has been relaxed, the traveling business has started to grow again. It seems that R also has no intention of quitting the traveling business that has raised her name.

Data analysis categorization made in Table 2.-The six informants have the four indicators of Longenecker's entrepreneurial character. Still, if we examine the three most reliable indicators possessed by the six informants, it can be seen from the coloured table columns. Informants D and R seem very willing to take risks, where D opened a coffee shop right at the time of the pandemic, and R changed her business during this pandemic.

Table 1 Profile of Informants & Informant's Business

Initial	Class of	Time being an entrepreneur	Business before pandemic	Business after pandemic
A	2002	>10 years	Motorcycle workshop and selling spare part online	Motorcycle workshop and selling spare part online
D	2005	6-10 years	Beauty consultant	Coffee shop
F	2006	6-10 years	Tower crane, outdoor blackboard, coffee shop, barbershop	Tower crane, outdoor blackboard, coffee shop, barbershop
G	2007	6-10 years	Bean bag, photography	Bean bag, cooked food
M	2008	6-10 years	Pre-wed photography (outdoor)	Pre-wed photography (studio) and cooked food
R	2002	>10 years	Travel agent	Reseller frozen food and any kind of product and travel agent

Table 2 Informant's Business and Data Categorization

Initial	Need to be successful	Willingness to take risks	Confident	Strong willingness/motivation
A	√	√	√	√
D	√	√	√	√
F	√	√	√	√
G	√	√	√	√
M	√	√	√	√
R	√	√	√	√

## V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The six informants all have the Longenecker's entrepreneurial characteristics. All of them have a strong motivation or desire to stay in the business world, for different reasons. This strong desire or motivation is actually driven by the need to succeed or to continue to have a business, even though conditions are tough like today. The need for success made the six entrepreneurs willing to take (measurable) risks with considerable self-confidence.

The advice that can be given is, the six entrepreneurs should often attend online training or seminars to enhance their business skills and also broaden their knowledge in the business world. Another suggestion is assistance from their alma mater in the form of discussion sessions with all entrepreneurial alumni to expand the network for entrepreneurial alumni.

## REFERENCES

- [1] L. Tambunan, Resesi ekonomi: Korea Selatan dan Singapura Masuk Resesi, Indonesia Diprediksi juga akan Masuk Jurang Ekonomi (Economic Recession: South Korea and Singapore in Recession, Indonesia is Predicted will also Enter the Economic Deep Hole), BBC News Indonesia, July 27th, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/indonesia-53544365> on July 29th, 2020.
- [2] A. N. Dzulfaroh, Pandemi Virus Corona Membuat 7 Negara Ini Alami Resesi (Corona Virus Pandemic Make These Seven Country Experienced Recession), Kompas.com, August 2nd, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2020/08/02/192700865/pandemi-virus-corona-membuat-7-negara-ini-alami-resesi?page=all> on August 3rd, 2020.
- [3] P.A.M. Fajrin. Konsumsi Masyarakat Lockdown, Ekonomi RI Langsung Jatuh (Public Consumption Lockdown, Indonesia's Economics Fall), Katadata.co.id, May 7th, 2020. Retrieved from <https://katadata.co.id/yuliawati/indepth/5eb4c3030760a/konsumsi-masyarakat-lockdown-ekonomi-ri-langsung-jatuh> on July 29th, 2020.
- [4] Biro Pusat Statistik, Laju Pertumbuhan Kumulatif Domestik Bruto Menurut Lapangan Usaha (persen) 2017-2020 (Cumulative Growth of PDB According Business Field [percentage] 2017-2020), last update May 5th, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.bps.go.id/dynamictable/2017/05/05/1253/-seri-2010-laju-pertumbuhan-kumulatif-produk-domestik-bruto-menurut-lapangan-usaha-persen-2017---2020.html> on July 29th, 2020.
- [5] Bappenas, IDF 2019: Modernisasi UMKM Atasi Permasalahan Masyarakat, Bantu Perekonomian Nasional (IDF 2019: Modernisation of MSME Handle Community Problem, Help National Economic), July 3rd, 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.bappenas.go.id/id/berita-dan-siaran-pers/idf-2019-modernisasi-umkm-atasi-permasalahan-masyarakat-bantu-perekonomian-nasional/> on July 29th, 2020.
- [6] S. Novika, Kena PHK di Tengah Corona, Bisakah Tuntut Perusahaan?, (Getting Fired in the Middle of Covid-19, Could Sued Company?), finance.detik.com, May 12th, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://finance.detik.com/berita-ekonomi-bisnis/d-5010998/kena-phk-di-tengah-corona-bisakah-tuntut-perusahaan> on July 29th, 2020.
- [7] A.S Gunawan, A. Cahayani, Kisah Anak Muda Biasa Perintis Bisnis Luar Biasa (Story of Ordinary Young People who Build Extraordinary Business), Penerbit Universitas Katolik Indonesia Atma Jaya, 2020.

- [8] A. Dhaliwal, Role of entrepreneurship in economic development in International Journal of Scientific Research and Management (IJSRM), vol. 4, Issue 06, 2016, pp. 4262-4269. Website: [www.ijsrm.in](http://www.ijsrm.in) ISSN (e): 2321-3418.
- [9] H.M. Nishanthi, Analysis of entrepreneurial traits of the small business owners in Sri Lanka in International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, Volume 4, Issue 10, October 2014, pp. 1-7. ISSN 2250-3153.
- [10] D. F. Kuratko, Entrepreneurial leadership in the 21st century, guest editor's perspective, in Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies, vol. 13, No. 4, 2007. 1-11. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/203134024?accountid=48149> on March 2nd, 2014.
- [11] A. Dhaliwal, Role of entrepreneurship in economic development in International Journal of Scientific Research and Management (IJSRM), vol. 4, Issue 06, 2016, pp. 4262-4269. Website: [www.ijsrm.in](http://www.ijsrm.in) ISSN (e): 2321-3418
- [12] D.F. Kuratko & RM Hodgetts, Entrepreneurship: Theory, Process, Practice, 7th ed., Thomson, 2007.
- [13] P. A Wickham, Strategic Entrepreneurship, 3rd ed., Essex: Prentice Hall, 2004.
- [14] Logenecker, Kewirausahaan: Manajemen Usaha Kecil (Entrepreneurship: Management of Small Business), Salemba Empat, 2001.