

EPISTEMOLOGY OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE: A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION IN CONTEXT OF ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

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Abstract

This research aims to explore the epistemology of failure and success within the context of Islamic philosophy of education through a qualitative approach. By delving into the philosophical foundations of Islamic education, this study seeks to understand how failure and success are perceived, understood, and valued in the Islamic educational framework. Using carefully selected YouTube videos, the study uses a qualitative content analysis research method with the key terms "success, failure, real success, real failure, successful, and unsuccessful." In order to determine the concept of true success and failure from an Islamic perspective, nearly ten video clips were purposefully chosen and transcribed from Urdu into English. The true meaning of success in Islam has nothing to do with material possessions, good health, notoriety, respect, or large homes. Failure, on the other hand, is defined as being untrue, dishonest, impatient, and not adhering to the core principles of the faith, which results in an eternity in Hell. The findings of this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the epistemological aspects surrounding failure and success in Islamic education.

Keywords: YouTube, Epistemology, Success, Failure, Islamic Philosophy.

Introduction

Everyone aspires to success and realize their greatest potential in this world; however, different civilizations, countries, and faiths have varied perspectives on

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success. Individuals with large sums of money, advanced degrees of education, and high social status are typically regarded as wealthy and prosperous in all cultures and nations, and 99 percent of individuals on the planet strive for this achievement by their actions (Romney et al., 1979). Given that different people and cultures have varied perspectives on and uses of success and failure, these terms have historically been polarizing and dynamic. Every nation's energy is directed toward achieving its goals of perceived success and avoiding its alleged failures (Wang & Bhargava 2021). In the material world, success is equated with wealth and financial security. To be successful in certain areas means to have the five Cs: cash, car, credit card, condo, and country club membership. As a result, various people define success differently, and different strategies are used to get there.

In Islamic faith, the concept of success and failure is rooted in the belief that ultimate success lies in achieving closeness to Allah (God) and attaining paradise in the afterlife. Muslims believe that life in this world is a test, and success or failure is determined by how well one adheres to the teachings of Islam and fulfills their obligations to Allah. Failure, on the other hand, is viewed as deviating from the path of righteousness and falling short in fulfilling one's religious obligations. It includes disobedience to Allah's commands, committing sins, and neglecting acts of worship and moral responsibilities. Failure in Islamic faith is not limited to temporary setbacks or worldly losses but encompasses the loss of salvation and eternal happiness in the afterlife (Cohen, R. (1966).

It is important to note that Islam recognizes human fallibility and acknowledges that individuals may make mistakes or commit sins. However, repentance, seeking forgiveness from Allah, and striving to improve one's conduct are encouraged as means of rectifying those failures. Muslims believe in the mercy and forgiveness of Allah, and sincere repentance can lead to redemption and ultimate success. Ultimately, success and failure in Islamic faith are judged by Allah based on one's faith, piety, and actions. The focus is on the spiritual and moral dimensions of life rather than external markers of success. Muslims are encouraged to prioritize their relationship with Allah and strive for success in both this world and the hereafter by leading a life in accordance with Islamic principles (Witro, 2019; Lerman, 1981).

In Islamic faith, the concepts of success and failure are therefore, understood within the broader context of one's relationship with Allah (God) and adherence to Islamic teachings. Islamic teachings emphasize the pursuit of success not only in worldly matters but also in the spiritual realm. It is important to note that success and failure in Islamic faith are not solely based on outward circumstances or the attainment of worldly goals. Muslims believe that Allah is the ultimate judge of success and failure, and His wisdom may not align with human perceptions. Muslims are encouraged to place their trust in Allah, maintain patience during times of

difficulty, and seek guidance through prayer and reliance on Him (Lerman, 1981). Overall, success in Islamic faith involves aligning one's actions and intentions with the teachings of Islam, striving for spiritual growth, and seeking the pleasure of Allah. Failure is viewed as a temporary setback that can be overcome through sincere repentance and reliance on Allah's mercy and forgiveness (Ali et al., 2020; Ramadani et al., 2015).

The Quranic Definition of Success

The priorities for fostering the perceived success of its adherents are mostly determined by religion. This is also the case with Islam. Numerous times throughout Quraan, success and failure are discussed. The subsequent verses in the second Sura of Quraan discuss the characteristics of prosperous individuals.

الم (١) ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ (٢) الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ (٣) وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ (٤) أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (٥)

“Alif. Lam. Mim. This is the scripture that provides advice to people who guard off evil without a doubt. Who build worship, who believe in the Unseen, who spend what We have given them, and who have faith in the revelations to you (Muhammad) and those who have revelations prior to you, and who have assurances for the Hereafter. These rely on their Lord's direction. These people are prosperous.

Napoleon Hill identifies having a clear goal as the first lesson in his book *The Law of Success*, in order to avoid wasting life in aimlessness. Muslims no longer need to spend as much time or money figuring out what their life's mission is, despite the fact that many do. As Allah tells us:

“And I created humanity and the jinn solely for their own worship.” [Qur'an; 51:56].

In another place, Allah says in Quraan

“The inhabitants of Paradise and the inhabitants of the Fire are not the same. The people who live in Paradise will triumph..” (Quran 59:20)

In the Quran, Allah (God) informs us that the people who live in the garden and the people who live in the fire are not the same. The achievers, the ones who are successful, are the ones who reside in the garden. The process of figuring out one's life purpose might take a lot of time and money, but for Muslims, it's been made simpler. The prize for living a successful life is a happy ending that results in an eternal house of pleasure. So what exactly constitutes a successful life? Is it unmatched wealth, excellent health, contentment, or a life free from stress? (Saqib, 2015).

This study was conducted to arrive at candid form of definition and perception of success and failure in Islam from the transcription of youtube videos of reknown Islamic scholars. The short introduction to these scholars is as under

Introduction to the Islamic Scholars

The Muslim community in the Middle East, North America, and Western

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Europe mostly followed Dr. Israr Ahmad, a Pakistani expert of Islamic law. Dr Israr is among the most eminent scholars of Islam in history. Over 10 billion people watch him on Peace TV and YouTube. His intelligence, writings, talks, and works throughout the seven continents have won him admiration. He authored over sixty books on Pakistan and Islam. Of them, twenty-nine works have been translated, including into English, into various other languages..

Tariq Jameel widely known as Maulana Tariq Jamil is a religious scholar, public speaker and preacher who spreads pearls of wisdom and spiritual knowledge among common people that have long been restricted to old traditions of ignorance and books on shelves. Tariq Jameel, who was honored with the Pride of Performance award, was featured twice in *The 500 Most Influential Muslims*.

Tariq Masood, popularly referred to as Mufti Author and Islamic scholar Pakistani-born Tariq Masood is a lecturer at Karachi's Jamia Tur Rasheed Seminary. He teaches at the Karachi-based Jamia Tur Rasheed. Tariq Masood is the author of multiple works, such as *Family Planning and Aik se Za'id Shadiyoon ki Zaroorat Kyu* (*Why the need for polygamy*). The quantity of people that have subscribed to the YouTube account of Mufti Tariq Masood exceeds 610 thousand. With 2,278 videos published, it has amassed over 48.9 million views overall. Every month, Mufti Tariq Masood produces about 37 new videos on average. The number of people following Mufti Tariq Masood has been increasing month after month. From 19,8k views per day in March, the channel today boasts over 31.5k viewers.

After working as an Arabic instructor at Nassau Community College, Pakistani-American Arabic speaker Nauman Ali Khan launched the Bayyinah Institute for Arabic and Qur'anic Studies. He was selected by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Center of Jordan as one of the 500 most powerful Muslims worldwide. Nouman is among the most well-known and important young Western professors, with millions of followers on social media (Wikipedia).

Objectives

The following objectives guided the study.

1. To explore the concept of success and failure in wordly perception.
2. To explore the concept of success and failure in islamic faith through youtubes videos of religious scholars

Research questions

1. What is the worldly concept of success and failure?
2. How is the concept of success and failure perceived in Islamic faith?

Ethical Considerations

The chosen videos were accessible on YouTube as video recordings. There was nothing delicate or contentious about the tapes' subject matter that needed to be kept secret. Nevertheless, great care was taken to ensure that there were no inconsistencies

in the content when transcribing the speeches. Additionally, it was made sure that the information taken from the social media platform would only be objectively utilized for this study.

Significance of the Study

The struggles and energies of life of all humanity revolves around these two fundamental concepts of success and failure. So this struggle should be in the right direction to avail the true and real outcomes out of this scrap. The right kind of life struggle will result into real and eternal success while life struggle on wrong belief will result into eternal failure. To save humanity from the greatest loss, this research article proves to be a guiding tool and enlightenment for people of all ages and regions for choosing the right course of action in life for struggle in order to achieve the real success and save themselves from eternal failure.

Methodology

Ten movies or video clips of religious experts are included in our sample. These were found through a search on YouTube using four key phrases input in a general-to-specific order:

(i) success (ii) real success (iii) failure (iv) real failure (v) successful (vi) unsuccessful

This article used qualitative methodology and the instrument were videos of top 15 famous religious scholars. Among the 15 religious scholars videos, the videos of only four scholars were selected. The answer research questions of this study were found in the videos of three scholars. The videos were transcribed in English language text and the text was analyzed in the light of research questions. Ten videos featuring academics from various religious backgrounds were used as the data for a qualitative content analysis. The collection of speeches was examined for the frequency of recurrent words. Ten videos featuring five distinguished professors were examined as a purposive sample for the research study in accordance with the previously stated outline, and themes pertinent to the research questions were found. A single word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, or the entire book can all have references to the same theme (DeSantis et al., 2000). The expressions of an idea are traced while depending on a theme as a coding unit. As a result, the words, phrases, and sentences that projected the patterns and themes found in the data were noted.

Results And Findings

The concept of "success", "failure", "real success", "successful" and "unsuccessful" has been used in many ways in the speeches of the selected scholars. The data was coded and themes were derived from the data keeping in view the research questions and objectives of the study. The very first theme that came across the data was the definition of success and failure.

Definition of Success and Failure

There is no one person in this world who wants to spend an unsuccessful life. Everyone wants to spend a successful life; If there is someone who wants to spend a

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unsuccessful life then he would be mad, stupid, and out of mind. A man with who has sound wisdom, would never wish to be a failure in life. There is no disagreement in this. If you ask an Englishman, a Hindu and Jews about what they want; they would say success. Rich, poor, women, children, even animal want to succeed. Some try to be successful fast and some try less. The one who are lazy tries less effort for success. The one who are active tries more effort for their best. The disagreement however, arises among scholars about the definition of success. Maulana Tariq Masud

“What is success in the eyes of ALLAH(God)? Pleasing of ALLAH is a success and displeasing of ALLAH is a failure, Getting in paradise is a success and falling down into Hell is a failure. This is the subject of Quran”. Maulana Tariq Jameel

While Maulna Tariq Masud talks about the concept in the follwing words

“I was telling that if this is the definition of success and failure such as as wealth, health, fame and respect! After which everyone is chasing today! Then, mostly hard worker do not get it and mostly get it with less effort. Sometime wrong people get it who cause restlessness in the world. It means that if this is the definition of success then the blame will be on ALLAH (God) that Maaz ALLAH there is no worst system than His (God) in the world. If ALLAH is right, then it means then this definition of success is wrong. This is not a success. This is the deception of success. Am I conveying my views??? Then what is a success? Quran says again and again the one who follows laws other than Quran, is not successful. ALLAH says that success lies in following the religion of Islam”. Maulana Tariq Masud

Wordly concept of Success and Failure

The concept of success is percieved differently according to diverse beliefs in the nations.

“Success is not what people say success. It is not a success, they take money, fame and health as success. If we take this view as the definition of success, then It means mostly people will become fail. If being successful and unsuccessful is not in your hands in reality, then it is cruelty from ALLAH (God)! that some people are made successful in free while they are not doing nothing but are successful! some of people are forcibly made fail although they make great effort for success. So, what is the definition of success in people eyes, it is wealth, health and respect. Arent these?? We call him a successful man who have these three things. The countries who have health, wealth and respect are called developed countries with strong passport. They roam in the whole world without visa tension”. Maulana Tariq Masud

“The standard set in our minds! What are they?? Success is about money! Success comes from property! Success comes from business! Success comes from fame! Success comes from power! These are the standards!The richer you are! the more successful you are! The more famous! the more successful! The more popular! the

more successful! The one who become a leader, succeeded! Whoever accumulated a big business, is successful. Who made a lot of money, is successful! This is actually illusion. You will strive according to your concept of success. This is what the struggle will be for. All your effort will be for that. You will work hard day in and day out for it. This is what is being put down here." Dr Israr Ahmed

"They consider this worldly success as success. Phiroh also misunderstood this concept. He used to tell Hazrat Musa (Moses) that you don't have money and "I have rivers flowing under my palaces". I have the success and you don't have the success. Quraan says in this regard that you don't consider the worldly success as success. The life style of Piroh was wrong the life style of Mosses didn't have anything but was right. Understand! He was on the right path and Phiroh was on the wrong path. His development ruined him. If Phiron would not have drown in water still he would have died. When die! then finish. All the success at the time of death of human being is finished just like world trade center fell down. If the builders of world trade center knew that it would be destroyed! Then, would they build it?. The human beings also makes effort on the body and eventually the body becomes finish. This is the end. So work on this body for hereafter, earn money for hereafter, educate yourself for hereafter then there will be happiness and satisfaction and the time of death will come nearer, the satisfaction and calmness will be greater. Maulana Tariq Masud. (Appendix A)

According to the Qur'an, the criteria of success and failure for Muslims is different from everybody else. We Muslims do not consider worldly gain & material progress as ultimate success rather those that have Taqwa, the Fear of Allah, and have cleansed their hearts of arrogance, pride, anger, greed and hatred are considered to be the ultimately successful ones. Noman Ali Khan

The chunks from the transcription of data from you tube video clips reveals that people consider money, health, respect and power as success and generally chase these in their whole life to be successful.

Concept of Success and failure in Islam

"ALLAH and his prophet gives the summary of something. Quraan has 114 suras (chapters) and approximately 6666 ayats (sentences). The gist of whole quran is presented in a small sura which stamps on the notion of success and failure. Allah has oathed in Quraan many times and this is last oath of Quraan. Allah does not need taking oaths but that's just to make us understand. Allah says in Sura Aser " I take an oath of the time/age, all the human beings are certainly drowned in the ocean of failure except four people who can save themselves from this failure. One who believe in ALLAH and secondly who did noble/righteous deeds; so believing and having faith in ALLAH is the first condition and doing righteous deeds is the second condition to be saved from this failure; and third the ones who keep on advising towards the truth (preachers of Islamic religion) which is the responsibility from ALLAH on all people to

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spread the religion after the last prophet Muhammad. (These are the compulsory papers in which one can not ever cheat) and the fourth condition and paper is to advise each other of having patience. My dear sisters and brothers, these four are the essential and compulsory papers to get the success in this world and hereafter and these four are the compulsory papers to escape the failure in this world and hereafter. (The meaning "in" gives a very dangerous meaning here showing that vessel of humanity is drowning in ocean and somebody asks; is there any escape for any one? and the answer comes that "yes" doer of four actions can save themselves from this failure)" Maulana Tariq Jameel

This part of speech reveal four conditions which can result into success of all human beings including faith/beliving in ALLAH, doing rigtheous deeds, advising toward truth and advising toward patience while absence of these qualities can result into a greater failure for ever. While in chapter 103 of the Quran, God Almighty swears on the hands of time that none of us will win unless we follow these four principles: believe, act morally, impart knowledge to one another, and support one another in exercising patience (Quran 103).

Dr Israr Ahmed conveys the content of same Sura in slightly different words.

"Success is not about wealth. Success is not about fame. Success is not about power and leadership. Rather, success comes from faith by righteous deeds, by advising each other for truth, advising each other for patience. Please understand and focus on this attitude. The mental attitude! Only its change will bring about a revolution in the human personality. Now what is the result you get? If you had success with wealth, Qaroon would have been very successful! If the success was through leadership, Phiroh and Nimrod would have been very successful! Success is not because of these in wealth if a man reach the wealth of Qaroon, and take the place of Nimrod and Phiron the world in terms of dominion, power, leadership and kingship, he has failed, he has lost, he has lost he has lost. Abu zar Ghaafari (companion of Prophet Muahhamad SAW) is successful even if they had nothing". Dr Israr Ahmed

"Obtaining money is a temporal success and not getting money is temporal failure, actually its not a failure, it is a situation and test. ALLAH gave Yazeed the throne and made Hussain murdered on narrow, so does it mean that ALLAH is displeasd from Hussain and pleased from Yazeed; the one who was too dangerous for humanity. The family of prophet mortyring on arrow is a test, our prophet had two stones on the belly, is a test. One Calif Umar RTA came into prophet Muhammad house and began to cry to see the poverty. Our prophet asked why are you crying? Caliph Umer told that Kings of Pharis and Rome eat meals in the golden pots and you- the king of this world and hereafter live in this povery; Hazrat Muhammad told that they have luxuries in this world and we will have in hereafter". Maulana Tariq

Jameel

“Every one of us would love to see success I need to realize success in this lifetime is closely connected to the success of the hereafter Subhan Allah! success and true success in this world is closely connected to your success in the hereafter when you are bothered about what's going to happen to you after you are going to die you will be able to prepare correctly and live a life of contentment; unfortunately many of us, may Allah forgive us and guide us, starting with myself I mean many of us consider materialism a source of success when I can afford this car this house this watch this phone these accessories this perfume these holidays these clothes then I've succeeded. That is temporary my brothers and sisters! when your salary is a million dollars it does not mean you have succeeded holistically rather that success is very very limited it is only a portion perhaps 5% of what we as believers would consider success and for that reason a large plan is always that those who have the world with them and the materialistic world with them are not necessarily the happiest in fact they are not from amongst the happy ones because happiness and contentment is achieved primarily by understanding a larger plan by understanding you have to worship Allah alone you have to build a relationship with the one whom you are going to go back to one day helplessly”. Mufti Menk

“Not having money not having power! None of that actually has anything to do with failure. if you have it, like for example, the point is if you have money It's possible that you're a success, but it's also possible that you're a failure. If you don't have money, it's possible that you're a success and it's also possible that you're a failure That doesn't determine whether or not you're a success our failure has nothing to do with it. As a matter of fact, the only thing that determines success or failure Failure is about losing! isn't it? But what is the ultimate loss according to the surah Aser? Time! so if you're not using your time wisely Then you're a failure and if you're using your time wisely then you are a success!” Noman Ali Khan

“My Prophet said: Take four things from me. The worldly success is yours and the Hereafter success is yours. Protect the trust. Always tell the truth, do not lie, keep good morals, do not be immoral, earn halal income, do not earn haraam. So the economy will be strong. At the individual level, the trader speaks the truth, does not mix the right weights, do not commit fraud, do not hoard, if the economy is strong, then it is at the individual level. -And at the government level, every quota of usury is being reduced. It strengthens the economy”. Maulana Tariq Jameel (Appendix A)

Core Findings from the Themes

According to the great religious scholars, the concept of success and failure in islam is confined to the following

- *Every one want to be successful but the disagreement arises among scholars about the definition of success. (Maulana Tariq Masud*
- *The teachings of the Quran indicate that poverty and failure are unrelated to*

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each other. For Muslims, success and failure mean different things than they do for non-Muslims. (Noman Ali Khan)

- *As a matter of fact, the only thing that determines success or failure. Failure is about losing isn't it? But what is the ultimate loss according to the surah Time!? so if you're not using your time wisely Then you're a failure and if you're using your time wisely then you are a success! (Noman Ali Khan)*
- *If you work on this body for hereafter, earn money for hereafter, educate yourself for hereafter then there will happiness and satisfaction and the time of death will come nearer, the satisfaction and calmness will be greater. (Maulana Tariq Masud)*
- *Pleasing of ALLAH (God) is a success and displeasing of ALLAH is a failure, Getting in paradise is a success and falling down into Hell is a failure. This is the subject of Quran. Obtaining money is a temporal success and not getting money is temporal failure actually its not a failure, it is a situation and test. ALLAH gave Yazeed the throne and made Hazrat Hussain AS murdered on arrow, so does it mean that ALLAH is displeasd from Hussain and pleased from Yazeed; the one who is for dangerous for humanity. The family of prophet martyring on arrow is a test, our prophet had two stones on the belly, is a test. My Prophet said: Take four things from me. The worldly success is yours and the Hereafter success is yours. Protect the trust. Always tell the truth, do not lie, keep good morals, do not be immoral, earn halal income, do not earn haraam. So the economy will be strong. At the individual level, the trader speaks the truth, does not mix the right weights, do not commit fraud, do not hoard, if the economy is strong, then it is at the individual level. -And at the government level, every quota of usury is being reduced. It strengthens the economy. (Maulana Tariq Jameel)*
- *Allah says in Sura Aser " I take an oath of the time/age, all the human beings are certainly drowned in the ocean of failure except four people who can save themselves from this failure. One who believe in ALLAH and secondly who did noble deeds; so believing and having faith in ALLAH is the first condition and doing righteous deeds is the second condition to be saved from this failure; and third the ones who keep on advising towards the truth (preachers of Islamic religion) which is the reposnibility from ALLAH on all people to spread the religion after the last prophet Muhammad. (These are the compulsory papers in which one can not ever cheat) and the fourth condition and paper is to advise each other of having patience. (Maulana Tariq Jameel)*
- *Be reminded ! Refresh it! This belief of yours! Success is not about wealth! Success does not come with wealth! Success is not about power! Success is not about fame! Success is not about property. Success is by faith! Success*

comes from good deeds! Success is by truth! Success is by patience. (Dr Israr Ahmed)

- *Success is not about wealth. Success is not about fame. Success is not about power and leadership. Rather, success comes from faith by righteous deeds, by advising each other for truth, advising each other for patience. Please understand and focus on this attitude. Only its change will bring about a revolution in the human personality (Dr Israr Ahmed)*

The concept of success and failure can further be summarised in few words from the data.

Success In Islam

Beliving in ALLAH

Fear of Allah

Truth

Honesty

Patience

Earning halal (legal in islam)

Preaching truth

Following laws of islam

Using time wisely

Receiving paradise

Consideraing hereafter

Failure in Islam

Not beliving in ALLAH

Lie

Dishonesty

Impatience

Earning haram (illegal)

Not preaching the truth

Not following laws of islam

Wasting time

Receiving hell

Notconsidering hereafter

Conclusion

In the Islamic context, success is described as reaching paradise, the ultimate goal. Our supposed success, whether it be in terms of money, health, or leading a fulfilling life, is limited. Eventually, it will come to an end. If we lose our job, our marriage, our children, or our ability to be recognized as the excellent person we want to be, our worldly existence is typically viewed as a total failure. We are not going to succeed in Islam in the end at all because of these circumstances. What matters is our response to divine commands and our handling of life's obstacles. A person is set up for ultimate success by his or her faith, attitude, aim, traits, and capacity to believe God's promise.



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