

[DOI: 10.21511/j.ponte.2020.10.15](https://doi.org/10.21511/j.ponte.2020.10.15)

APPLICATION OF STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING IN THE MISSION OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH): A STUDY ON HIS VISITS TO TA'IF

Principal Author

Mr. Mohamed Nismy Rafiudeen

Ph.D. candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.

nismyrdeen@gmail.com

Co- author

Dr. Mohammad Ismath Ramzy

Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.

ismathramzy@um.edu.my

Co- author

Dr. Ahmad Zabidi Bin Abdul Razak

Deputy Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.

zabidi@um.edu.my

&

Co- author

Dr. Muhammad Babangida Muhammad

Director, Centre for Qur'anic Studies, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria.

abunazir73@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Studies show that successful personalities in human history were strategic in their decision-making process. As far as the Prophet Muhammed in human history is considered by some sociologists and historians as the most successful leader and administrator, this research attempts to highlight his decision-making process from his biography. However, his decision to visit Ta'if is being observed as an isolated incident and has not been studied as an integral part of his overall mission. Hence, the researchers intended to explore this event from leadership perspective and to understand the significant role of socio-political context in decision making process. The researchers used qualitative content analysis methodology along with SWOT analysis to study the literature of the Prophet's biography. This study revealed that the Prophet Mohammad' decision to visit Ta'if was a strategic that paved the way of reviewing entire his planning to become an extra-ordinary socio-political and religious leader in the history. This study highlights the significance of strategic decision-making skill of a leader and its role in making the successful leadership.

Keywords: Prophet Muhammad, Strategic Decision, Ta'if visit, SWOT Analysis.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Strategic decision-making is one of the popular terminologies used in leadership and management discipline. It is also is a critical feature of successful leadership. Studies show that successful personalities in human history were strategic in their decision-making process (Kase, 2010).

Michael H. Hart (1932-2011), an American astrophysicist and white nationalist who studied the social change based on Prophet Mohammad found (1978), Prophet Mohammad as the most successful leader in human history. According to him, the Prophet Mohammad managed to bring social change and build a civilisation based on religious principles within twenty-three years. Although scholars have studied the major and minor events in the life of the Prophet Mohammad, from different perspectives, they hardly focused on finding the reason for the success of Prophet Mohammad in transforming the pagan Arabs into a civilized society within few years. This research argues his strategic decision-making skill was the reason for the success.

Despite of many events in the life of Prophet Muhammad such as migration from Makkah to Madinah (622 CE), Madinah treaty(622 CE), Hudaibiya treaty (628 CE) and his final sermon(date) revealed this skill, the Prophet journey to Ta'if from Makkah (619 CE) was a significant even that clearly reveal strategic decision making of Prophet Muhammad. Hence, this research studies the strategic decision-making skill of Prophet Muhammad based on his visit to Taif.

Since the mission of the Prophet Mohammad was establishing an ethical society based on universal values and justice,¹ he decided to check Ta'if, fifty miles away from Makkah for this mission, after failure of his efforts in Makkah for ten years (As-Sallaabee, 2005).The tribal leaders in Makkah used different measures to challenge the mission of Prophet Muhammad including an embargo for three years (616 CE) in the valley of Abu Talib. However, Prophet Muhammad determined to change the place rather than giving up the mission. He visited Ta'if alone and studied social dynamism and other factors for ten days. Hence, the researchers intended to explore this event within the overall mission of Prophet Muhammad and to study the strategic decision-making skill of Prophet Muhammad as a mission leader.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section summarises the works of various literature related to the objective of this research. Historians and scholars have studied the biography of Prophet Muhammad in different perspectives. Ibn Ishaq (767 / 151 AH) documented the biography of Prophet Muhammad. Although a large number of Muslim and non-Muslim scholars expanded the information, only few of them have studied these events objectively and highlighted the lessons from leadership perspective. Hence, this section in this article logically documents related studies that would help to comprehend the visit of Ta'if within the overall mission of Prophet Muhammad.

2.1 The Vision and Mission of Prophet Muhammad

The mission of Prophet Muhammad was establishing an ethical society based on universal values described in the Quran (Nizah et al., 2013). Prophet Muhammad commenced this mission at his age of forty and achieved at the age of sixty-three (Al-mubarakpuri, 1996). The Muslim and non-Muslims scholars have studied the mission of Prophet Mohammad based on his biography such as Sirat Rasul Allah (The life of the Prophet) by Ibn Ishaq (767/ 151 AH); As-Sirah an-Nabawiyah, the edited works of Ibn Ishaq by Ibn Hisham (834/ 218 AH); History of the Prophets and Kings by Muhammad Ibn Jarir Al-Tabari (923 / 310 AH); and Al-Sirah al-

¹ Kathir, A. H. I., & al-Atsari, A. (2013). *Al-Bidayah wan nihayah: zaman Khulafa'ur Rasyidin*. Crescent News, Vol.7, p 39 and al-Tabari, I. J. (1988). *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk* (Tarikh al-Tabari), ser. III. *New York*, p 520

Nabawiyah (The life of the Prophet Muhammed) by Ibn Kathir (1313/ 700 AH). The contemporary popular works include *The Prophet* (Gibran, 1923); *Muhammed: His life based on the earliest sources* (Lings, 1983); *Ar-Raheeq-ul-Makhtum* (Al-Mubarakpuri, 2002); *The Life of Prophet Muhammad: Highlights and Lessons* (As-Siba'ee, 2005); *Noble Life of The Prophet* (As-Sallaabee, 2005); and *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad* (Ramdan, 2006). Particularly *Muhammad in Mecca* (Watt, 1956); *Muhammad* (Rodinson, 2002); *Muhammad* (Demi, 2003); and *Muhammad: A Prophet of our time* (Armstrong, 2006) highlighted the mission of the Prophet from critical and historical perspectives.

However, study of mission by Ibn Kathir (1313 CE/700 AH) in the life of Prophet Muhammed (Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah) is a popular among those studies since this study mainly depends on the exegesis of the Qur'an (As-Siba'ee 2005). As- Sallabee (2005) and Ramdan (2006) discussed and analysed the various incidents in the life of Prophet Muhammad in the light of his mission. Both of these scholars studied these incidences including the expeditions of Prophet Muhammad to Ta'if based on following verses of the Qur'an.

“Indeed, We sent forth Our Messenger with clear Signs, and We sent down with them the Book and the Balance, so that men may establish justice.” (Al-Hadid 57:25)

“He has laid down for you as the Way that which He charged Noah with – and that We have revealed to you – and that which We charged Abraham with, and Moses, and Jesus: establish the Way, and follow not different paths (regarding it).” (Al-Shura 42:13)

“And when We took a pledge from all the Prophets – from you (O Muhammad), and Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and Jesus the son of Mary – We took from them a solemn pledge.” (Al-Ahzab 33:07)

Hence, the verses of the al-Qur'an demonstrate the fundamental mission of the Prophet. The mission of Prophet Muhammad, according to these verses, was establishing an ethical society based on universal values and social justice.

In an occasion one of the chiefs of the Quraysh, Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah approached Prophet Muhammad and persuaded him giving up his mission, Prophet Muhammad recited the verse 41:1-13 in the Quran, that explain his mission. Subsequently, Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah returned to his companions and told them: "Men of Quraysh, take my advice and do as I say. Stand not between this man and what he is doing for, by God, the words that I have heard from him will spread quickly. If the Arabs kill him, others would have rid you of him; and if he overpowers the Arabs, his sovereignty will be your sovereignty, his power your power, and you will prosper because of him." (Ibn Ishaq, 1955: 132-133). This incident shows the mission of Prophet Muhammad and his commitment

A tradition narrated by Khabbab Ibn al-Aratt clearly explains the mission of Prophet Muhammad. During the period when Prophet Muhammad and his companions were severely persecuted by the people of Makkah, Khabbab Ibn al-Aratt approached Prophet Muhammad and asked "Will you not ask for victory for us? Will you do not pray for us?" Prophet Muhammad said: "There were such people before you that a man would be seized and a pit would be dug for him in which he would be thrown, then a saw would be brought and placed over his head, and he would be cut into two, and his flesh would be combed away from his bones by iron combs. Still, nothing would turn him away from his religion. By God, He will

complete this mission until a rider will travel from San'a to Hadramawt and will have no fear but of God, and no worry but about a wolf that might harm his cattle – but you make haste.” (Bukhari, Riyad as-Salihin Book 1, Hadith 41).

This incident explains the mission of the prophet. According to Prophet Muhammad, establishing an ethical society based on values and justice was his mission. He said, people will find peace and harmony in this society and will not fear for any injustice from the government or people but only from the wild animals.

2.2 Major Events in Prophet's Life in Strategic Perspective

Strategic decision-making is a powerful approach for those who are striving to achieve long-term goals, amidst challenges in terms of resource constraints, threats from opponents, and other unforeseen factors. It is the process of plotting a development based on long-term goals (Gartenstein, 2018). Hence, the vision is one of the critical aspects of the Strategic decision-making process. In other words, it is the process of assuring to focus on the efforts, where the need is greatest (Haslam and Shenoy, 2018).

As mentioned before, in executing the mission, the Prophet encountered many threats and challenges from tribal leaders as well as surrounding communities. Since the Prophet started this mission as a single person, his strategic decision-making skill must have played a crucial role in facing these challenges and completing the mission. In this journey, his decisions in major incidents such as migration of his companions to Ethiopia (Absysinia), Makkah to Madinah, Hudaibiya treaty can be studied from present Strategic decision-making tool, SWOT (S- Strength; W- Weaknesses; O- Opportunities; and T- Threats) analysis. The prophet decision visiting Ta'if is an important incidence among all.

2.3.1 Migration of Companions to Abyssinia

The decision to migrate his companions from Makkah to Abyssinia was one of the historic decisions he made in his life, and the consequences of that move manifest for its strategic nature. The Prophet advised some of the companions to migrate from Makkah when the persecution and torture were intolerable anymore (Ibn Ishaq, 1955: 208). This migration was held in Rajab, five years after the Prophethood. Prophet Muhammad made the decision following the divine instruction from Allah;

“O My slaves who believe! Certainly, spacious is My earth. Therefore, worship Me (alone).” (Qur'an 29:56). “... And Allah's earth is spacious (so if you cannot worship Allah at a place, then go to another)! ...” (Qur'an 39:10)

Ibn Kathir interpreted this verse and said that Allah commanded Prophet Muhammad to migrate to a place, where they could find peace and harmony and also practice their religion without any disturbance (Ibn Kathir, 2013: 70/ 029 Ankabut). Hence, Prophet Muhammad chose Abyssinia for the migration (Ibn Ishaq 1955: p.146). Though some scholars found this migration as a plan to provide a temporary relief to Prophet Muhammad's companions from the torture (As-Siba'ee 2005), the study of this event from the mission of Prophet Muhammad highlights Prophet Muhammad's strategic decision. Prophet Muhammad wanted to continue his mission in Abyssinia if it fails in Makkah.

The list of companions who migrated to Abyssinia supports this argument. The majority of those companions who were advised to migrate from Makkah to Abyssinia had strong tribal supports and they were protected by their tribes. Particularly, the list of migrated groups comprised the name of noble classes of the Quraysh such as Uthman ibn Affan, Az-Zubair ibn Al-Awwaam, Mus'ab ibn Umair, and the team was led by the eloquent speaker Ja'far ibn Abi Taalib. Referring to the tribal rules during that time, these tribes would have protected them further from people of Makkah although these tribes were against the mission of Prophet Muhammad. This shows that the migration to Abyssinia was a strategic decision of Prophet Muhammad and it was an alternative plan to continue his mission if the mission in Makkah failed. It is further elucidated by returning plan. Although the people who migrated to Abyssinia were asked to return to Medina after the Hijra, the leader of the migrants were requested to remain in Abyssinia until Madinah became safe and a strong.

Nizah et al., (2013) discuss that the migration to Abyssinia as an example of Prophet Muhammad's decision making skills in the perspective of international relations, Therefore, it is evident that the decision made by Prophet Muhammad on the migration to Abyssinia was a strategic in nature and alliance with his overall mission (Hareir and M'Baye, 2012: p.44).

2.3.2 Migration from Makkah to Medina

The Prophet's decision to migrate from Makkah to Madinah is another example for his strategic decision. In addition to people of Makkah, Prophet Muhammad continuously explained his mission to the people who visit Makkah for different purposes. Subsequently, Prophet Muhammad met some influential people from Madinah who came to perform religious rituals and sought their support for his mission. A group of these people accepted to support to him and invited him to Medina. Prophet Muhammad decided to accept this invitation after studying the nature of people in Medina (Ibn Ishaq, 1955: p.197-218).

Despite of some historians described the Prophet migration to Medina from Makkah as a way of protecting him and his companions from the enemies of Islam, the plan and preparation for this event (Sudiman, 2017) convinced that the decision of the Prophet to migrate from Makkah to Medina was not a sudden decision or an escape plan, rather it was a strategic decision in line with his mission. The prophet took three years to study the social environment in Medina, nature of people as well as socio-political conditions (As-Sallabee, 2005: p.607-609). He sent Musab Bin Umair to Medina (621 CE) and Musab submitted periodical reports on socio-political conditions of Medina.

As-Sallabee (2005: p.630) discussed, Madinah was naturally a safe place, surrounded by mountains that block any army to enter. He also further elaborated noble characters of the people of Madinah (Aus and Khazraj), particularly their braveness and love of freedom. The prophet although their qualities and characters from his maternal relatives in Madinah, it was confirmed by his envoy Musab Bin Umair (622 CE). Hence, the Prophet took decision to migrate from Makkah to Medina based on research and studies.

The preparation to the migration is another aspect of strategic decision. The Prophet not only prepared the name list of people who would migrate with him to Median as well as the list of people who would receive them in Madinah (As-Sallabee, 2005, p.607). He also prepared the people physically and psychologically as communicated by the verses of the Quran such as

39:10; 16:41-42; 16:110. Hence, this preparation shows that the Prophet took the decision strategically in line with his mission.

The scholars who studied the migration of the Prophet from Makkah to Medina like Qassim (2014); Sulaiman et al. (2015) and Aslam (2015) confirmed the strategic decision of the Prophet to migrate from Makkah to Medina by referring to incidences in subsequent years (As-Sallabee, 2005, p.696). Aslam (2015) argues that the decision of choosing Madinah reflects the ability of the Prophet in adopting the Blue ocean as well as Red ocean strategies. Hence, he chose a location where there were comparably low people resistance to his mission and high attractiveness towards his mission.

2.3.3 Hudaibiya Treaty

The event of Hudaibiya treaty is another incidence that witnessed (Ismail, 2015) the ability of the Prophet to make strategic decisions (Al-mubarakpuri, 1996; Beekun, 2006; Sheikh, 2013). Anjum and Wani (2017) argues that the Hudaibiya treaty paved the way to the Prophet to proceed his mission peacefully since the existence of peaceful environment is vital for the mission.

The Treaty of Hudaibiya was held in the 6th year after Hijrah (628 CE) (Mubarakpuri, 1996). Although Prophet Muhammad wanted to expedite to Makkah to perform Umra (an optional ritual of Islam), along with his companions and communicated this purpose with the chief of Makkah, the chief of Makkah and his people stopped Prophet Muhammad at the place called 'Hudaibiya'. After the negotiation, two groups agreed to come up with a peace accord known as Treaty of Hudaibiya

Prophet Muhammad agreed to sign in the treaty despite of having some conditions biased to the people of Makkah and unfavourable to Prophet Muhammad and his companions. Although the companions of Prophet Muhammad did not like to agree on these unfavourable conditions, Prophet Muhammad decided to sign in the accord and to observe it without any disturbance. The Quran described Prophet Muhammad decision to sign in the agreement ignoring unfavourable conditions as strategic decision (Qur'an 48:1). The consequences of this Treaty also witnessed the far-sighted decisions of Prophet Muhammad (Karsh, 2016).

2.4 Visit to Ta'if

Prophet Muhammad visit to Ta'if also is another example for strategic decision of the Prophet Mohammad and his leadership skills. Considering the significance of this event, this research focussed on this event to highlight the ability of Prophet Mohammad to make strategic decision-making skills. According to Muslim historians like Ibn Ishaq (d.955) and Ibn Kathir (d. 1373/ 760 AH), Prophet Muhammad decided to visit Ta'if, after tremendous efforts to establish an ethical society in Makkah for ten years. He lost hope for his mission in Makkah particularly after the death of his uncle Abu Talib, the leader of the ruling family Quraysh. Prophet Muhammad, therefore, looked for an alternative location for his mission (As-Sallaabee, 2005) and wanted to check Ta'if as.

Despite of some scholars like El-Wafa (2009) describes Prophet Muhammad's visit to Ta'if as an effort for seeking asylum, the historical consequences and Prophet Muhammad's reaction to the denial of Ta'if people mainly the clan Banu Thaqif underline the importance of studying

this visit in line with the mission of Prophet Muhammad and his strategic leadership. As far as Ta'if visit is significant and was the turning point in the mission of Prophet Muhammad, researchers studied this even to highlight the strategic decision-making skill of Prophet Muhammad and his leadership.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

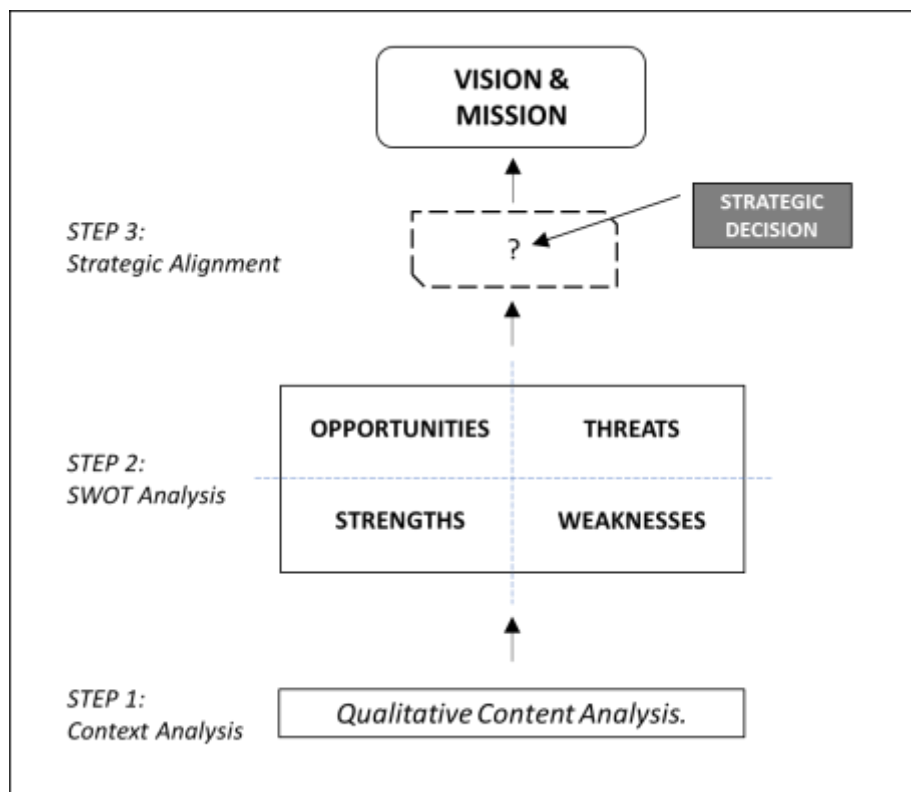


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Strategic decision making is the process of selecting the most appropriate solution out of various alternatives through carefully analysing the business environment to achieve a long-term goal (Nemati et al., 2010). Hence, the decision is derived through analysing the various factors and their weights in relations to the long-term goals. The researchers reviewed the literature and understood the context through qualitative content analysis. Then the SWOT analysis tool is used to classify the factors in terms of SWOT criteria to examine the decision made by the Prophet in alignment with his overall mission and vision.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The researchers used a qualitative content analysis methodology by reviewing the literature. The qualitative content analysis method focuses on extracting the concepts by analysing the data (Cho & Lee (2014). The books related to the biography of Prophet and research papers on various aspects in the prophetic mission have been studied to comprehend the approach of the Prophet to accomplish his mission and vision. In addition to that, the interpretation of the Qur'anic verses, specifically revealed during the major events in his life have been pondered upon. The

researchers used SWOT analysis instrument to analyse the major events of the Prophet's life to see their alignment with his overall mission and vision.

Determining the population and sampling is the initial step of designing content analysis methodology. In this research, the text related to the major incidents happened in the Prophet's mission were studied. The 'Purposive sampling' method was used to collect data in this research (Sbaraini et al., 2011). The purposive sampling is a type of sampling technique in which, "particular settings, persons, or events are deliberately selected for the important information that cannot be gotten as well from other choices" (Maxwell, 1997, p. 87). The literature primarily used in this research were the classical work on the biography of the Prophet, the life of the Prophet Muhammad (Al-Sira al-Nabawiya) of Ibn Kathir (1313 CE/700 AH), and one of the modern works produced by As- Sallaabee (2005), which dealt with of the Prophet's life objectively.

Table 1: List of literature used in this research

#	Name/type of literature	Description
1	'Al-Sira al-Nabawiyya', the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (Volume 1 – 4)	One of the classic works of literature about the Biography of the Prophet Muhammad was written by the classical scholar Imam ibn Kathir (700 – 774 AH / 1313 – 1387 AD). English translation was performed by T. L. Gassick and published by the Centre for Muslims contribution to civilisation, Garnet publishing.
2	<u>Noble Life of The Prophet (3 Volumes)</u>	This is one of the modern literature in the Prophet's (PBUH) biography authored by <i>Dr Ali Muhammad As-Sallaabee</i> in 2005. This work drives the lessons and morals from various events and actions in the Prophet's life. This Book was published by Darussalam publication.

In addition to these primary sources, various works of literature about Prophet Muhammad were used as the secondary sources for this research. These works of literature were used to analyse the strategic nature of the decisions taken by the Prophet related to two major incidents.

The literature was reviewed to understand the context around the Prophet's visit to Ta'if. Hence, the factors which influenced the taking of such a decision in terms of SWOT were gathered through the literature. While collecting data, four components (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) of SWOT analysis were kept in mind in relation to the overall mission and vision of the Prophet. During the data collection, some of the questions were not answered sufficiently due to the unavailability of the information. Notably, the researchers were unable to find the information about the situation of Makkah while the Prophet was in Ta'if.

Generally, the decisions could be classified into three; strategic decisions, administrative decision and operational decisions. While the administrative and operational decision depends on the Strategic decisions, the strategic decisions are long-term and taken in accordance with the mission and vision of the organisation. The ability to make decisions is considered as one of the critical features of successful leaders. It is the process of choosing the best possible solution out of various alternatives to address a problem. It is always not easy to make the right decision, especially in a troublesome situation in which the available time to make the decision is short; accessible resources are limited; consequences of the decisions will have a long-term

impact. Hence, the approach of strategic decision-making could minimise the risk of wrong decisions and drive through the process of identifying the most appropriate decisions (Papadakis, 1988).

Strategic decision-making is the process of identifying the best possible strategy by strategically analysing the current situation from internal and external perspectives in-line with the long-term goal. The results of the process could be either contextually advancing towards the goal or retreating from the goal.

According to the BNET Business Dictionary, Strategic Analysis is "the process of researching the business environment within which an organisation operates and, on the organisation, itself, to formulate strategy" (Downery, 2007). Some various tools and techniques have been developed over the last few decades to enhance the strategic analysis process towards the best possible decision. Examples of analytical methods used in strategic analysis include PEST analysis (Ho, 2014), Porter's five forces analysis (Dobbs, 2014), value chain analysis (Fearne, Martinez, and Dent, 2012), wargaming (Hu, 2005), and SWOT analysis (Helms and Nixon, 2010).

The SWOT analysis is a simple but widely used tool that helps in understanding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved in a situation concerning the desired goals. It is one of the primary tools used to evaluate the internal potentials and limitations and the opportunities and threats or challenges from the exterior environment. It views all positive and negative factors inside and outside the firm that affect success. Its applicability is beyond profit-centred organisations. The SWOT analysis could be applicable to identify the strategic position, make a strategic decision and build appropriate strategy at no-profit organisations, government entities, and individual level when the desired end-state (objective, goal, or vision) is defined (Christian et al. 2014).

By considering the suitability and its adoptability with social change mission, the researchers chose the SWOT analysis to analyse the Prophet's decision-making approach related to Ta'if visit. The analysis was performed in three steps related to each incident (Table 2).

Table 2: Analysis steps

Step	Description
1	To perform qualitative content analysis and collect the data related to the particular incident.
2	To classify the data under each SWOT criteria and examine whether the Strengths and Opportunities support the decision.
3	To examine the alignment of the particular decision with the overall mission and vision.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses the outcome of the SWOT analysis related to the Prophet's Ta'if visit and found that the decisions made by the Prophet were strategic and they were aligned with his overall mission and vision. Hence, it is shown that the Prophet's decision to visit to Ta'if was strategic. This sub-section discusses the results of the analysis related to the Prophet's decision to visiting Ta'if.

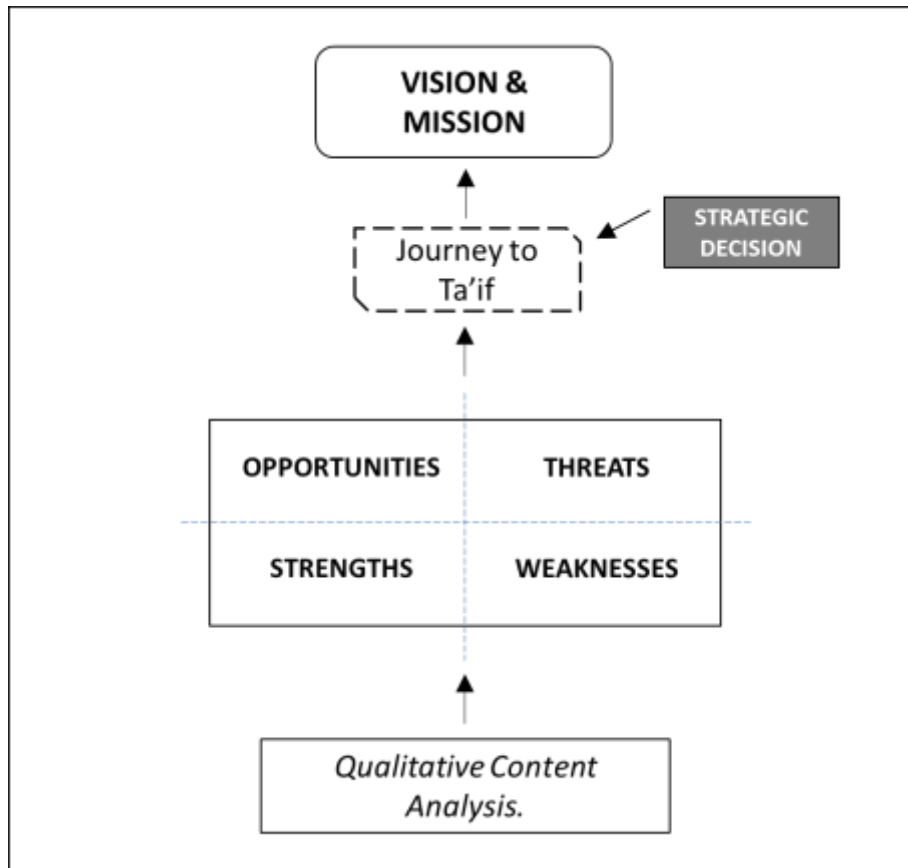


Figure 2: Theoretical Framework: Decision to visit Ta'if

4.1 Context before the visit to Ta'if

The Prophet's visit to Ta'if took place in the tenth year of the Prophethood, (in the last of May or at the beginning of June 619 A.D.) (Al-Mubarakpuri, 1998). Abu Taalib, the leader of Quraysh and the protector of the Prophet throughout his mission in Makkah for ten years, died. Since Abu Taalib was a die-hard polytheist, the Quraysh honoured him abstained from harming to the Prophet out of respect to his uncle Abu Taalib and tribal rules. However, after the death of Abu Taalib, the situation became worse and the ordinary members of Quraysh also gained the confidence to persecute the Prophet. The death of Khadeejah, the Prophet wife and another influential personality among Quraysh also weekend the prophet. Eventually, the Prophet lost his hopes in Makkah for his mission. Madinah, that time was not his hope since it is 400 km away from Makkah has no single person to support for his mission. Although, Abyssinia was a hope, the prophet wanted to see an option in Arab peninsula rather than other places. Hence, Ta'if, was his first an alternative option.

The strategic importance of Ta'if might be another reason for choosing Ta'if for the mission. It is because, Ta'if was second business centre of Al-Hijaz, which had a close connection with Yemen. Ta'if was divided into two groups politically namely; Banu Malik and Ahlaf, the group holding the custodianship of the temple of Al-Latt.. Ahlaf was closer to Quraysh and usually get their support against Banu Malik. The Prophet sought help from Banu Thaqif, a clan attached to Ahlaf using this connection (As-Sallaabee, 2005).

According to Ibn Ishaq (1955), the Prophet stayed in Ta'if for several days and approached the leaders for his mission. Although the lay people in Ta'if agreed to support him, the leaders did not agree and persecuted the Prophet. They instigated their slaves and boys to pelt him with stones (Ibn Ishaq, 1955).

Despite the visit of Ta'if was failure, the Prophet learnt lessons out of this visit and changed his strategy. Indeed, this visit was the turning point in the history of his mission and provided confidence. This visit also gave him assurance to work for his mission without the support of any influential people like Abu Talib or other among his enemies.

4.2 SWOT Analysis

According to the SWOT analysis, it is revealed that the Prophet must have calculated various factors related to the decision to visit Ta'if. It is required to analyse the primary motivation of his decision to visit Ta'if before discussing the outcomes of the SWOT analysis, whether the Prophet was seeking to achieve for a short-term objective of finding an immediate replacement for the loss of Abu Taalib or long-term solution?

Based on the biographical notes related to his Ta'if visit, the answer can be safely concluded that the Prophet was not seeking a short-term solution. He was well aware of the procedure to gain protection according to the customs of Arab. It is reported that the Prophet obtained protection from Mut'im ibn Ade'e, the chief of the Banu Naufal ibn Abd Manaaf tribe after he returned from Ta'if. Hence, if the objective of his decision to visiting Ta'if was to protect himself from the attacks of Quraysh, he could have obtained it without leaving Makkah. Therefore, the researchers opined that the motivation of his visit to Ta'if must be related to long-term objectives.

It is revealed from the SWOT analysis that Ta'if was more fertile, and it is land more productive than that of Makkah. It was observed that Quraysh had the ambition to conquer Ta'if before the advent of Islam. Hence, the leadership of Ta'if allied with the Quraysh due to the fear of any potential attempts. Bani Makhzoom had financial dealings with the leaders of the Ta'if, Thaqeef tribe.

The people of Makkah owned properties in Ta'if, and they used to spend their summer in their orchards. The Prophet must have noticed that Ta'if was always in need of support to defend from foreign invaders such as Hawaazin, Quraysh, and Banu Aamir. Furthermore, Ta'if was led by an alliance of two groups (Banu Malik and Al-Ahkaaf), and each group was allied with stronger outside tribes. However, the Prophet also must have been aware that those alliances were fragile. Hence, the Prophet must have calculated to shift the Balance of the region through gaining support from one of those groups. Particularly, gaining support in Ta'if could influence the minds of Quraysh, in terms of their financial and political interests.

The Prophet must have assessed his strengths to capitalise the opportunities mentioned above. He was aware that Banu Haashim had a close relationship with the people of Ta'if. Based on his ten years experiences in Makkah with Chieftains of Makkah, must have the confidence to face the leaders of Ta'if and convince them to gain their support. After all, the Prophet must have the strong trust on Allah that He will grant victory to him through this decision and attempt.

The ordinary people of Ta'if were not exposed to the message of Islam. According to Al-Mubarakpuri (1998), the Prophet spent ten days in Ta'if to invite the people to Islam. There are no records available to confirm that anyone of them accepted his invitation and came forward to support. However, the Prophet must have confidence that his efforts will influence their subconscious minds and bring results in future. This is evident from the conversation the Prophet had with the Angel of Mountains, who said, 'O Muhammad, 'it is as you please. If you want me to make, Al-Akhsbain (two mountains) fall upon them?' The Prophet said to him, 'I instead hope that Allah will bring out from their progeny those who will worship Allah alone, without associating anything with Him' (Sahih Bukhari, 3231).

Therefore, it is evident that the decision made by the Prophet was strategic towards his overall mission and vision, assigned by Almighty Allah.

4.3 Strategic Alignment

According to the literature, the researchers opined that the Prophet effectively utilised his ten days visit to Ta'if. He met the leaders of Ta'if and conveyed his message very clearly. When they refused to accept his invitation, he said to them, 'If you do what you are doing (i.e., disbelieve), then keep my matter a secret.' (Ibn Hisham, 2/72). Moreover, the Prophet spend around ten days to convey his message to the common people; however, the chieftains prevented them from accepting the message. Overall, the message was presented across the Ta'if community, from top to bottom (Al-Mubarakpuri, 1998). In strategic point of view, if the central authority of the Ta'if (Thaqeef) would have accepted the invitation of the Prophet, the Quraysh would have been isolated in the Arabian Peninsula, and the Prophet should have established authority for Islam. This might have been the objective of the decision of the Prophet to visit Ta'if. Hence, this decision is aligned with his overall mission and vision; conveying the message of Islam and inviting them to establish a social set-up upon the principles of divine guidance, towards a peaceful living environment for humanity

The Prophet was well aware of the character of tribe of Thaqeef. This was evident after the battle of Hunain. They did not surrender to the Prophet, and the Prophet supplicated for them, saying, 'O Allah, guide Thaqeef, and bring them (to the truth; bring them to us to announce their entry into the fold of Islam)' (Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah, pp. 566). However, Thaqeef was not willing to break the alliance of Quraysh out of fear, and the strategy of the Prophet was not realised immediately as expected. The Thaqeef tribe was the last to embrace Islam among the Arab Polytheists (As-Sallaabee, 2005).

5.0 CONCLUSION

The Prophet Mohammad started his mission at the age of 40. He was an accepted leader in Makkah before starting his mission. He closely studied the people and understood their socio-economic and administrative issues. Although he was aware of the problems and issues, he did not know the solution. Upon his appointment as the Prophet by the God, he understood the solution from the revelation and spent entire his life for this mission.

Although he realized the mission from the revelation from the God, the execution of the mission was entirely left to the Prophet Mohammad. Hence, he mobilized people towards the mission and provided them solutions to their socio-economic and political issues. The challenges he

faced in executing the mission clearly revealed human weakness as well as leadership skills as discussed before.

From this perspective, this research discussed the Prophet Mohammad decision to visit Ta'if and its socio-political background that convinced the researchers to consider as strategic in line with his overall mission. The analysis of Data showed that the objective of the visit was a plan to find the right place for setting up a center that guides his mission and manage executing plan. This visit not only provided him a detail information that required to execute the mission but also strengthen his self-confidence and psycho-spiritual well-being. His experience with the Thaqeef tribe of Ta'if which had a strong relationship with Quraysh tribe of Makkah highlighted the importance of having international relationship in making strategic decisions. Hence, the researchers opined that the Prophet Mohammad' Ta'if visit was successful in terms of learning and planning although it was failure in term of his mission. In addition to that the visit was successful in terms of conveying his message across the city of Ta'if even if they had rejected it from him as at then.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, A., Bwisa, H.M, Otieno, R.O., and Karanja, K. (2014). Strategic Decision Making: Process, Models, and Theories. *Business Management and Strategy*. 5. 78. 10.5296/bms.v5i1.5267.
- Anjum, M. R., and Wani, B. A. (2017). Concept of Peace in Islam: A Study of Contributions of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan to Peaceful Coexistence, *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, Volume 7, Issue 6, ISSN 2250-3153
- Aslam, A., Joupari, N. Z. P. and Zandi, G. (2015). The Strategies in the Battles and Struggles of Prophet Muhammad: How It Can Be Applied in Modern Business, *International Business Research*, Vol. 08, No, 11.
- Al-mubarakpuri, S. R. (1996). *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, Maktaba Dar-us-Salam, Saudi Arabia.
- As-Sallaabee, A. M. (2005). *The Noble Life of the Prophet (3 Vols)*, English translation, Dar-us-Salam publications.
- At-Tirmidhi, A. E. M. I. E. (2007). *Jami At-Tirmidhi (A. Khaliyl, Trans.)*. Darus Salam Publications. (Original work published 270 AH/ 884 AD)
- Az-Zubaidi, A. Z. A. A. (1997). *Shaih Al-Bukhari (M. M. Khan, Trans.)*. Dar-us-Salam publication. (Original work published 232 AH/ 846 AD)
- Barghuth, T. (2006). *The approach of the Prophet (PBUH) to protect the Da'wa (Arabic Book)*, International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT).
- Beekun, R. I. (2006). *Strategic Planning and Implementation for Islamic Organizations*, International Institute of Islamic thought, ISBN 1-565664-064-0
- Dobbs, M. E. (2014). *Guidelines for applying Porter's five forces framework: a set of industry analysis templates*. Competitiveness Review.
- Downery, J. (2007). *Strategic analysis tools: Topic gateway series No. 34*.
- EL-Wafa, A. A. (2009). *The right to asylum between Islamic Shari'ah and International refugee law: A comparative study*, Published by Naif Arab University for security sciences, p. 95.
- Fearne, A., Martinez, M. G., & Dent, B. (2012). *Dimensions of sustainable value chains: implications for value chain analysis*. *Supply Chain Management: An International Journal*.
- Fonge, F. (2015). *Conceptualising the Trajectories and Proselytisation of Islam in Africa*, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 5, No. 3.

- Fontaine, R. and Ahmad, K. (2013) Strategic management from an Islamic perspective, Published by John Wiley & Sons Singapore Pte. Ltd.
- Gartenstein, D. (2018). What is Strategic Decision Making? <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/strategic-decision-making-23782.html>. Online (08.05.2018)
- Haykal, M. H. (1976). The life of Muhammad (translated from the 8th edition by Ismail Ragi al-Farugi). P. 138-139.
- Hart, M. H. (1978) The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History, (Revised Edition, 1992).
- Hareir, I. E., and M'Baye, E. H. R. (2011). Different Aspects of Islamic Culture: The Spread of Islam Throughout the World (Multiple history series) (Vol. 3), UNESCO publishing, ISBN 978-92-3-104153-2
- Haslam, S. and Shenoy, B. (2018). Strategic Decision Making, EAN: 9780749472603
- Helms, M. M., & Nixon, J. (2010). Exploring SWOT analysis—where are we now?. Journal of strategy and management.
- Ho, J. K. K. (2014). Formulation of a Systemic PEST analysis for strategic analysis. European academic research, 2(5), 6478-6492.
- HU, X. F., SI, G. Y., Luo, P., YANG, J. Y., ZHANG, M. Z., & WU, L. (2005). Study on War Complex System and War Gaming & Simulation [J]. Acta Simulata Systematica Sinica, 11.
- Ibn Kathir. A. I. I. U. (2006). The life of the Prophet Muhammad (Volume-1), (T. L. Gassick. Trans.). The centre for Muslims contribution to civilisation, Garnet publishing. (Originally published. 1345)
- Ibn Kathir, I. (2013). Tafseer Ibn Kathir (English, 114 Surah's complete). Online: <https://archive.org/stream/TafseerIbnKathirenglish114SurahsComplete/029Ankabut#page/n69/mode/2up>, Accessed: 13.05.2018, p. 70.
- Ibn Ishaq, M. (1955). Sirat Rasul Allah (The life of Muhammed), Oxford university press.
- Ismail, M. (2015). The effectiveness of agreement Hudaibiya (Study of Conflict resolution method), JIP-International Multidisciplinary Journal, p-ISSN: 2338-8617
- Karsh, E. (2016). The Oslo Disaster, Mideast Security and Policy Studies No. 123, The Begin-Sadat centre for strategic studies, Bar-Ilan University, ISSN 0793-1042
- Kase, L. (2010). Great leaders are great decision-makers. Graziadio Business Review, 13(4), 1-5.
- Papadakis, V., and Barwise, P. (1988). Strategic decisions. Berlin: Spinger-Verlag.
- Qutub, S. (2007). Fi Dhilal al-Quran, Online: <https://www.kalamullah.com/shade-of-the-quran.html>
- Miftah, M. (2017). Key Dimensions in Abyssinia-Ottoman Relations in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: A Critical Review of Literatures, Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies, vol.10, no.1,
- Nemati, A. R., Bhatti, A. M., Maqsal, M., Mansoor, I., & Naveed, F. (2010). Impact of the resource-based view and resource dependence theory on strategic decision making. International Journal of Business and Management, 5(12), 110.
- Newby, G.D. (1989). The Making of the Lost Prophet: A Reconstruction of the Earliest Biography of Muhammad, Columbia: University of Southern California Press.
- Nizah, M. A. M., Zarif, M. M. M., Atoma, P., and Kandil, H. M. T. (2013) Political Creativity among Religious Leaders: The Case of Muhammad, World Applied Sciences Journal 24 (2): 270-275, ISSN 1818-4952.
- Qasim, M. I. (2014). Prophet Muhammad's Strategies on Security and Peace Building: Lessons for The Nigerian Society, IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Vol (19), Issue 11, e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845.

- Rodinson, M. (1971). *Biography of the Prophet., Mohammed*. Trans. Anne Carter (London).
- Rudnicki, W., and Vagner, I. (2014). *Methods of strategic analysis and proposal method of measuring the productivity of a company*, The Małopolska School of Economics in Tarnów Research Papers Collection, vol. 25, pp. 2,
- Siddiqui, M. Y. M. (1988). *The organisation of the government under the holy Prophet (saw)*, Islamic publication (Pvt) ltd., Pakistan.
- Shafi, M. M. M. (1974). *Maarif ul Quran*. A revised version of the translation by Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani.
- Sheikh, O. K. (2013). *Strategies of Prophet Muhammad*, Maktaba Dar-us-Salam, ISBN: 978-603-500-246-2.
- Sudiman, M. S. A. S. B. (2017). *Countering ISIS Call for Hijra (Emigration): A Review through the Lens of Maqāsid Ash-Sharī'ah*, Journal for Deradicalization, No, 12, ISSN: 2363-9849.
- Sulaiman, M. N., Othman, A. K., Larbani, M., and Hamzah, M. I., (2015). *The Applicability of Prophet Muhammad's Strategies in his Battles and Campaigns in Modern Business*, Asian Social science, Vol (11), 26.
- Osita, Christian, O., Idoko, O., and Nzekwe, J. (2014). Organisation's stability and productivity: the role of SWOT analysis, 2 (9). International Journal of Innovative and Applied Research: 23–32.*

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Mr. Mohamed Nismy Rafiudeen is a Ph.D. candidate at the at the Department of Educational Management, Planning and Policy, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya. He completed his B.Sc. in Civil Engineering and M.Sc. in Construction Quality Management at the University of Peradeniya (Sri Lanka) and at the University of Moratuwa (Sri Lanka) respectively. He completed MBA at the University of Wolverhampton (UK). He holds Higher Diploma in Islamic Studies and reading MA in Islamic Studies at International Open University (IOU). Currently he works in oil and gas industry. In addition to his profession, he actively involves in community education, and his interested area are Strategic Management and human resource development. He can be reached: nismyrdeen@gmail.com.

Dr. Mohammad Ismath Ramzy is Senior Lecturer, at the Department of Educational Foundation and Humanities, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya. He studied the discourses of Ven. Prof. Walpola Rahula for his PhD thesis at the International Islamic University, Malaysia (IIUM). He joined University of Malaya to the Centre for Civilizational Dialogue (CCD) in 2012 as a researcher in religious dialogue and became a faculty member of education in 2016. He actively involves in Sociology of Education and Muslim-Buddhist dialogue. His interest includes multiculturalism, intercultural education, Women studies and contemporary Islamic and Buddhist thought. Currently, he is involved in research projects like “Intercultural Education” and “Youth and Coexistence”. His recent publication includes “Managing Domestic Violence: Islamic Religious Perspective,” “Coexistence from Islamic Perspective,” “Religiosity as a mechanism to control violent behaviour among school children”. He can be reached: ismathramzy@um.edu.my.

Dr. Ahmad Zabidi Bin Abdul Razak is an Associate Professor at the Department of Educational Management, Planning and Policy, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, and he is currently the Deputy Dean (Research and Development) at the faculty. He received his Bachelor Degree and Master degree from University of Malaya and PhD degree from Massey University, New Zealand. His area of specialization and research is in educational management and leadership; and human resource in education. He has headed several researches in the area of educational management and leadership; and human resource management in education, funded by various agencies. He has authored and co-authored several books, articles and research reports in the area of educational management and leadership; and human resource management in education and education in general. He can be reached: zabidi@um.edu.my

Prof. Muhammad Babangida Muhammad, BA (Ummul Qura University, Makkah) MA, PhD (Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria. Formerly, Head of Department of Islamic Studies and Shari'ah and presently, Director, Centre for Qur'anic Studies, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria. He served as External Examiner and Supervisor and Moderator for many universities including the Islamic Open University. Muhammad is involved in a number of Islamic, humanitarian and community- based activities. He can be reached: abunazir73@yahoo.com