Participant 14 Interview transcript

**Interviewer:** So first can you verbally confirm whether it’s still okay for you to participate in this interview and to be video recorded?

**Participant 14:** Yeah, I’m happy to be recorded and to participate.

**Interviewer:** OK. Great. I will need to send you a consent form after this interview to fill in, just a few tick-boxes. But you probably know.

**Participant 14:** Yeah, It’s all right.

**Interviewer:** OK. Let me familiarise you with my research. So, I’m in my third year of PhD, and I’m researching in entrepreneurial success with some philosophical elements, but I don’t want to give you the entire picture because I want to capture your authentic opinion. But basically, I’m interviewing people who are entrepreneurs, and I would like to hear your opinion about extremely successful entrepreneurs. So, a bit about the data protection, your name is not going to be mentioned anywhere, I’m going to use acronyms or I’m going to just change the names, I haven’t decided yet but you will not be connected to the data that you give me. Only for categorisation purposes I will need to collect some of your personal details like your full name, your occupation and your age and educational level. So, if you can say these now?

**Participant 14:** So, can you repeat what you need exactly?

**Interviewer:** Your age, your occupation and educational level.

**Participant 14:** I’m 23, almost 24. My occupation is Marketing Assistant, and I finished a Bachelor’s in Marketing.

**Interviewer:** OK, great. So, before we begin can you tell me a bit more about your personal life and professional life?

**Participant 14:** Sure. So, I’m Romanian living in the UK, I moved here about 4 years ago, I did a Bachelor’s in Marketing at the University of Southampton and now I am working as a Marketing Assistant for a communications company in Southampton still. I have no entrepreneurial background particularly, I’ve just worked for different businesses but yeah, that’s a quick overview about me.

**Interviewer:** How about your personal life? Anything that you feel comfortable sharing?

**Participant 14:** Yeah, I’m very like introverted person, who’s reading and cooking. I live with my partner and I’m currently just enjoying my holidays.

**Interviewer:** That’s great. So you mentioned you didn’t have any particular experience with entrepreneurship but have you had any knowledge of entrepreneurship or anything to deal with entrepreneurship in the past?

**Participant 14:** I did an entrepreneurial class in high school if it counts? It was for about a week, and it was about the basics of setting up a business, but that’s in Romania, so not here. And I have a friend who was thinking of starting a business about two years ago before the pandemic hit. He was going to be providing like services for small companies to do automation but obviously the pandemic happened, and it didn’t happen, just because it was a very uncertain time. That’s the extent of my…and obviously I’ve worked for entrepreneurs, who opened their own marketing agencies before.

**Interviewer:** So, you’re dealing with basically, you’re working alongside the entrepreneurs?

**Participant 14:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** And how was that working out for you?

**Participant 14:** It’s been working out well. Most of our clients have been pretty small businesses, small and medium businesses and now we are working with large. But yeah, most of them were having an expansion like, time, this is before the pandemic though, and most of them were expanding their businesses and trying to get more clients. Right now, people are not necessarily expanding. Just sort of trying to sit and stay at the same level they were before. But no one that I’ve met has had any struggles or big struggles with it, just the usual, trying to get clients and that sort.

**Interviewer:** So, what are the entrepreneurs that you’re working with like? How can you describe them?

**Participant 14:** They’re very driven, very independent. From what I’ve seen, you know, they are stubborn at times, you know, the kind of people who like to work a lot and take on more than they should I feel like. But yeah, they’re very charismatic normally, just very friendly, most of them. Otherwise, if anyone is very successful, especially at the beginning. Yeah, they’re usually nice people to work with but very hard-working.

**Interviewer:** Great, so, before we begin with the main part of the interview, we can pin down a definition of what is an entrepreneur. So, I define it as someone who sets up a business or many businesses, taking on financial risk in the hopes of profits. What do you think about this definition?

**Participant 14:** I think it’s pretty accurate. Most companies, the purpose of companies is to make profit, I think this is very accurate description. Short but accurate.

**Interviewer:** Would you like to extend it, if you think it’s short?

**Participant 14:** It’s very short but I think it’s like. I don’t know how to explain it. Yeah, I can’t put it into words, but basically, it’s just like, as you’ve said it, I would just add that. Actually, I think for a definition it works well, don’t mind that.

**Interviewer:** OK, great. Not let’s go on to explore your views about extremely successful entrepreneurs. For the purposes of this interview, I define extreme economic success to mean having earned a huge amount of money out of entrepreneurial activity. So what/who crosses your mind when you think about an extremely successful entrepreneur?

**Participant 14:** Elon Musk, or Mark Zuckerberg, to me that’s extreme levels of success, like making billions and having a company that’s valid for being worth billions. Yeah, they’d be the first ones that would always pop into my head. That and Jeff Bezos.

**Interviewer:** So, can you describe what kind of people you think they are or what have you heard about them? Anything that you know?

**Participant 14:** So this is obviously my own personal view of them and how I…let’s take Elon Musk, for example. While I feel like there’s the previous description, I’ve given about the people that I know are entrepreneurs still stands…they’re still charismatic, they’re still like hard-working but I think it’s also because of the levels of success there’s a level of arrogance that comes with them and sort of like disregard to the rules that normally apply to like everyone else. So yeah, I think, while arguably they’ve been working harder, also all of them also have like a background of like wealthy, like wealth, that sort of… even though they still claim that they’re hard working, and they are. They also have the advantage and it’s almost like there’s a scheme over it, when they talk about how hard they work. They didn’t start from complete bottom like most people tend to do. But yeah, like… the arrogance is the first thing that pops into my mind, especially talking about Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos. Mark Zuckerberg I wouldn’t say arrogance, just a bit out of touch with reality like a lot of people.

**Interviewer:** And can you give any examples why do you think they’re arrogant?

**Participant 14:** I think at one point, when you’ve succeeded like such a lot of success and of money, you… because obviously you’ve had the opportunity and basically everything you’d like, I think the arrogance comes from that. ‘Oh, I’ve become successful; clearly, I’m smart. I have the power to do whatever the hell I want in life’. For example, Elon Musk was recently talking about how he can use technology to get rid of all autism, which again, I don’t think it’s necessarily something that he should be talking about; he should be doing. It’s not really related to normal ventures and he’s not like a medical professional either, so he can’t make claims like that, that what I feel. But yeah, that’s what I think the arguments come from. The power that they have and the money they have earned over time. It gives them a lot of privileges as well and he sort of claims he didn’t have that at the beginning, a lot of people don’t have that, so he kind of look down upon the rest.

**Interviewer:** What kind of privileges do you mean?

**Participant 14:** All sorts of privileges monetary gains can give you from, you know, from tax evasion to just being able to buy whatever cars and properties and going on whatever holidays you’d like and just… you are paying a lot of people, you have a lot of employees, you just have power over that as well because if you’ve given them, you know, their wages. Yeah, I think that sort of privileges, feeling like you are above the rules, that you can bend the rules a bit more than, let’s say the normal person who just works a normal job.

**Interviewer:** That’s great. So, is there anything or what do you especially like about these people?

**Participant 14:** Something that I like? I like when they do get involved in like causes that can help like normal people. Because at that… I think personally if you have that kind of power and money and like the ability to help and do good, you should. For example, when Zuckerberg’s Meta company, they do like fundraisers and they donate a lot of money to like children and hospitals and that sort of thing and then they participate in raising awareness about I don’t know, global warming or that sort of thing, yeah, I think that’s something that I like. And I think it should be encouraged because someone at that position should be trying to do good. Particularly someone who owns corporations, who tend to pollute as well. So yeah, I think this is what I like – when they get involved in causes that benefit humans, other humans. And that’s the point – without gaining anything from it.

**Interviewer:** And is there anything about their personality or character? Some of the characteristics they exhibit as entrepreneurs that you like.

**Participant 14:** Well obviously I haven’t met any of them, so it’s all I can say is based on what the media portrays them as. I don’t particularly like any of them, I have to say. Like for example I follow Elon Musk on like Twitter and one of the social medias. He comes off a bit like trying to ‘get down with the kids’ and like being cool and he’s really not that much or trying to come off as relatable when people like Mark Zuckerberg seems to kind of come from another planet occasionally because his social skills aren’t that great. And Jeff Bezos is just being very mean to his employees and stuff. So I don’t think there’s a particular thing I like about them personally. Yeah, I don’t really…

**Interviewer:** Let’s move on to dislikes. What do you especially dislike about them?

**Participant 14:** The whole attitude about how I am a great person, and you know I get to decide how you live. Obviously, the CEOs get to decide how employees get…like…conduct themselves at work and how they expect them to but when you have Jeff Bezos for example who tells, who’s office sends like emails down to his employees that they should keep working despite like the pandemic, despite tornadoes happening and just stay at work… I hate that. I feel like they work for you, they make you money, you should at least have the basic decency and respect for like every life that’s out there, that’s helping you out and I really don’t like that. I don’t like the fact that some people to them seem to be expendable, which is like another resource and not actual people with lives.

**Interviewer:** Does your explanation apply to all extremely successful entrepreneurs, or do you think the examples that you gave are specifically for good or worse?

**Participant 14:** They are the ones that I know a lot about because they’re always permanently in media. Obviously, there’s a lot. I don’t know much about Bill Gates for example. I know that he has, him and his wife, ex-wife, have a foundation that helps children in Africa. But I don’t know much about everyone, so I’m just giving these three as example because they’re the ones I’ve heard most about. I don’t think it applies to everyone. I don’t assume everyone’s a complete like Elon Musk mastermind. It’s just these three that I know a lot about.

**Interviewer:** So, you don’t think that there are certain skills or abilities that apply to all extremely successful entrepreneurs?

**Participant 14:** I mean, I assume that all of them have skills, like people’s, charisma, they’re like hard-working but I think there’s a base like for everyone, like it should apply to everyone, you can’t just become an incredibly successful person without exhibiting any sorts of skills. You just randomly show on the day and I’m a CEO, who’s a billionaire, you know. But I don’t think they’re all good, all bad. The same with normal people. They’re all very different. They’re all individuals who have different aspirations and different like personalities and roles. Some less than others, but yeah, I think there are some basic ones that apply to everyone like I said.

**Interviewer:** And what do you think differentiates them from those who fail to achieve a huge level of success in terms of money in entrepreneurship?

**Participant 14:** Well, I think there are a number of factors that can… a lot of things can go wrong about someone trying to become an entrepreneur. Especially very successful. I feel like It’s still very difficult to reach that level of success. It could be like your background, could be that you miss opportunity or maybe like you started in the wrong time – the pandemic and my friend who couldn’t start his business because everything just kind of went bad. It could be, you know, if we’re talking about racism or xenophobia, that could also be a part of it because you might be stop having opportunities where others might not just because of aspects like this. Your age as well. Your gender. There are a lot of factors that could simply go wrong. You can just have one day of bad luck that ruins your business idea from get go. And you might have great ideas that could make you as rich as Mark Zuckerberg but because you had those factors that kind of held you back that he didn’t have. Like for example everyone loves to give him as an example of ‘Oh, he dropped out of college, and now he’s a billionaire.’ But he didn’t drop out of a random, small college. You know what I mean? It was Harvard, or whatever he was. He had the money to get to Harvard, he had the support of his parents, and he was able to leave, he wasn’t in like a struggle to pay rent because of that, not like the rest of us. If I dropped out of school, I would have to get a job in Asda, I couldn’t start up a business. So yeah, I think there are a lot of different factors that could just like make you not become as successful as they were.

**Interviewer:** Great, that’s very interesting, we’re going to touch upon this in the next question actually. But let me introduce you to the next question. So let’s hear your thoughts on what stands behind extreme success. So, I understand this next question can be a bit difficult to answer with certainty, but I’d still like to get your thoughts on it. What to your understanding or opinion made the people from your example’s success possible? What stands behind their success?

**Participant 14:** That’s a good question. Well because I was talking about Zuckerberg anyway, I think what made him successful and what was like, it was a combination of obviously being smart because he had the idea, the skills to complete the code to run a website, the timing of it, because at the time the only big social media would have been MySpace or small ones in Eastern Europe like HI Five. And then obviously he had the background to help him out, the wealth, you know, just like the status that would help him start off a business without the struggles that a normal person would have. He was clever in getting the right people to help him out in starting up the business, in the connections, the networking is very important, I feel like. Especially at the beginning. Yeah, I think that’s how basically he became successful. I don’t know the stories about the others and how…I know Elon Musk had PayPal and I don’t know how he ended up in Tesla, no idea. While Jeff Bezos, again started off small, I think he was having the opportunity and was taking it at the right time because if now I try starting a Facebook, probably it wouldn’t be as successful, you know, because there’s so many other platforms already. But yeah, I think that’s how I assume it happened.

**Interviewer:** So you mention mindset. What do you by ‘mindset’?

**Participant 14:** I think mindset is important, especially you have to have, to know where you want to go, what you want to do, to have the discipline to get through with it because things are hard regardless of who you are. When you start a business thing can go wrong very quickly, you can get discouraged. And I think mindset is very important keeping on right the end, just working hard and you’re having a clear view where you’re trying to go, yeah. I assume they all dis, otherwise I’d find it very difficult for someone to get as successful as they are.

**Interviewer:** And how about ‘the right time’? You mention timing being a factor?

**Participant 14:** Well, as with most inventions and ideas, I think timing is very important. Like with Facebook, there was a need to have communication across the world but there was nothing that sort of fulfilled that, not in that way, you can like just randomly meet a person in a dating website, I’d assume, which was not very logic. Jeff Bezos found Amazon because there was need for like very quick deliveries and have a platform that had everything on it. Like you don’t want to visit 25 different websites to get 25 different products when you can just have one platform to get it all. I think when you are an entrepreneur, you have to find like the opportunity, find a niche that like no one’s exploiting and try to get into that; obviously if it’s needed. Yeah, I think that the right timing for them. They did find the right time to do it, because they were ahead of everyone else, so. You can see if you’re successful with people have tried copying the same thing you’ve done afterwards, like over and over, which has happened with various degrees of success.

**Interviewer:** And you also mention them being really clever.

**Participant 14:** Well, I believe so. Obviously again, from what I’ve seen as portrayed in the media, Zuckerberg was in Harvard, so you can’t just get into Harvard just because you wanted to. And he was very good at computer science, he was able to write the code for a whole website, that must be clever. Elon Musk, I don’t know much about. I know he was at PayPal. He did some studies, but I have no idea about them. But again, you have to be a bit clever to sort of figure out what you want to do, to understand the business itself and like the industry and what’s needed there, because otherwise it’d be…and struggle quite a lot to understand cars now and sell like an electric car, if you don’t understand anything about engineering or like the market itself.

**Interviewer:** And how about the people around them? So, you also mentioned this is a factor. What do you mean by that? Why are people important?

**Participant 14:** Well, when you obviously try to start a business, I feel like networking is very important just because reaching out to the people who could help you out in a business, like could be partners, could be sponsors, could be, just get a mentor for example, you know, people that could help you out, you could help each other out. For example I know when Facebook started, they got like angel investors to help them out and that only helped because he knew the person who knew the investors, so you know, you have to, it was important to have the correct connections that’d help you out and then in the long term, he’ll have people who have the experience, have gone through it and sort of know how to advise you in terms of what not to do or what to do, because they’ve been through it, so they would have experienced it before, even though it’s the exact same business. Yeah, I assume similar things about all businesses that start at the beginning. Yeah, that’s why I think people are important. Also, you can’t really start a business by yourself and just do It all on your own and become like a massive company. It’s impossible.

**Interviewer:** And going back to the time that you mentioned there being a lot of factors that are beyond the control of entrepreneur. So, do you think all entrepreneurs were in control of their extreme success?

**Participant 14:** I think they all control some things. Obviously when you start a business, you get an idea and like putting in all in motion, but I don’t think they have an entire control, like I said because of all the external factors that happen, the market being great, getting the investors, even though you are doing your best to attract all of those opportunities, there’s also I feel personally a degree of luck there that’s also needed to just get it all going and make sure that, you know, it expands as quickly as it did. No one would have expected for Facebook to take over or Amazon as quickly as much to the extent of the idea. Even analysts did not expect it to get this big. You never know. You could do all the research in the world. I do research in my job, but the way people react to your product or to your company is hardly up to them, regardless of how much research they’ve done into it, or like the work you put into it. So, it could be a complete success that just overwhelms you. It could be a complete flop, you know. They’re obviously in control of a set of things that they can control, like the product itself and how they expanded and marketed it, but it’s up to the world to just like perceive it and how they react to it.

**Interviewer:** Great, so what is. So that is probably outside of their control, so the people factor, but what can they control?

**Participant 14:** They can control I guess how they design the product, how it’s all marketed, how they conduct themselves with their employees, how they create connections, how they create what else? Sorry I just blanked out. They can control, like I said how they present themselves to the world, how their researching about what’s needed is done, legislations and all that jazz on the business side of it. Yeah, I mean obviously, keeping the mindset going and the work going, it’s always up to them as well. I think that’s what’s they can do. You put in all the work and then hope for the best.

**Interviewer:** Great. So, we’re almost halfway through the interview. How’s it going for you?

**Participant 14:** It’s going well, yeah, I enjoy it. I don’t really think about like very successful people before I think.

**Interviewer:** Well, I’m glad I made you think about that. The next question is important for me to fully capture your thoughts on extreme success in entrepreneurship. So, again, going back to your example, so Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, and Jeff Bezos, so what is, in your opinion, their contribution to our society?

**Participant 14:** Their contribution is a big one for all of them. They have brought innovation in like all these fields, like Jeff Bezos innovated the way people are doing online shopping, and like the supply chains and all that. You get chains based on Amazon. Facebook through Zuckerberg brought like connection with people from across the world, in a different level than what existed before. You could never like meet people from South-East Asia just with a few clicks, before Facebook happened. Tesla is great in terms of, you know, electric vehicles and potentially like getting in all the pollution that happened due to cars. So, they’ve had a big impact in terms of innovation and new technologies. Obviously, Meta is trying to now create like a whole new online universe, again a new innovation in terms of communications that doesn’t exist yet, but they’ll try it through VR and all these new things. So, they do bring a lot of things; new jobs obviously that didn’t exist before and new careers that people never had before their companies existed. Yeah, they have a big contribution; a positive one, I think. They also have a negative contribution, I think, just in terms of like pollution but yeah, they have a big, big positive one overall.

**Interviewer:** And can you elaborate more on the negative. You mention pollution. Is there anything else that you see as a negative contribution?

**Participant 14:** It’s also I think, but this is obviously, most corporations’ work-life balance is I feel like just a bit off but I feel like these big corporations like especially Amazon are known for this very bad stressful environment for their employees. Sort of like a negative aspect of it because there are a lot of employees, there are a thousand employees that are negatively impacted by the work hours and the weird regulations, and you know they’re not allowed to go to the toilet in the warehouses and that sort of a thing. I think that’s definitely something that needs changing. Yeah, the pollution is also big thing obviously Amazon pollutes for like their supply chains and you know, us putting all these products, it’s a massive increase in like greenhouse gasses because of the cars and the planes and whatever. Facebook with their like massive service and I think they moved somewhere in the Northern countries because of the heat that they produce and the massive power that it takes to keep everything running. So yeah I think these are really bad. I also think that corporations that gets that big like Amazon or like Facebook tends to just kind of go around the rules and there should be more regulations and in terms of that and just also the taxes that they pay and being held accountable for it, instead of just being, yeah we’ll do it and they never do. Yeah, I think these are the negative parts about it.

**Interviewer:** Ok. So you mentioned environmental factors and you mentioned financial factors that are quite negative, OK. If you could change that, what would you like to see happening more or less?

**Participant 14:** I would like to see obviously…Amazon’s kind of difficult to change the way they do their businesses because like you need transport regardless. It’d be nice to see more change towards like electric vehicles or trying to like do less the same day delivery and stuff like that because that brings a lot of like transport on the roads and in the air. It’d obviously be better if Tesla… Tesla is very expensive. It’s a great alternative to the usual petrol cars like having electric vehicles but it’s incredibly expensive, so again… And the production for it is very polluting as well. So again…I wish there would be more putting that down and just not using as much…there’s a lot of plastic as well, which is weird for a car. So again, maybe cut down from that. And obviously I would like to see more positive environment for the employees and the workers who make all this happen. Because I feel like they are the key to it all and they treat them all wrong. I don’t think you should be allowed to be as successful in a way because you’re responsible for them as a CEO and, you know, as the owner of the company.

**Interviewer:** OK. Do you think money is a good indicator of how much someone has contributed to our society? So for example if someone is extremely rich, this means they have contributed a lot. But if an entrepreneur is not rich, then they’ve contributed less.

**Participant 14:** Not really. No, I don’t think so because you could just be like… you could just be a very rich person and have millions, billions, and not sort of like bring anything to the table with it. Like I wouldn’t, lt’s say if Mark Zuckerberg was poor tomorrow, like he’d have less than a thousand pounds a month, I wouldn’t feel like ‘oh no, he’s not successful’, because while his company’s bringing a lot to the world in terms of as I said innovations and stuff and like jobs, I think them being rich is not necessarily a good indicator. Because again it can be like an entrepreneur like Donald Trump who got loans from his parents or his dad for…he’s rich but not necessarily because he worked hard. He didn’t start from zero. Kylie Jenner, again, while she was the youngest billionaire or whatever she was, but she came from like a big empire of money. See I think just money by itself is not a good indicator of whether someone’s successful or not, you know? You could have the money, just because you’re born at the right family and then you started the business.

**Interviewer:** And what could be a good indicator in your opinion?

**Participant 14:** If you have something to show for it and just like, if say Kylie Jenner, who is just talking about her products and make up brand and all that sort of thing and then she became rich off all that because she worked hard, she created these new things that no one else had, no one else was providing, I’d be like she’s a successful entrepreneur, she did this from ground up to become this… you have to start from a lower level and get to a higher level, if you start from the middle because you’re already rich and you become a bit more rich than you were, then I don’t say if that’s success in my opinion, you were lucky to be born in a proper environment.

**Interviewer:** Great. Well, it’s good that you mention luck because the next question is going to dive deeper into this topic, so it’s a bit controversial but some people would say that luck entirely plays a role in extreme entrepreneurial success, and you already mentioned that. So, what do you think is the role of luck in achieving extreme success in entrepreneurship?

**Participant 14:** There’s obviously, like I said, you could be born in an environment that allows you to focus solely on your idea and on your like company, so you could be born in rich family, family that’s able to provide you the means to start a company and like obviously you might not get profits in the first few years, you have to keep going personally. If you have that covered already by family or like wealth, that you already had or inherited, and you were lucky to be born and then you had no control over this, you were born in whatever place you were born, you can’t choose it. I think that’s one part of it and then the other part is like I said, you could have a great product, you could have a great idea that either person don’t really understand, even though it’d be great, it could save like…it could save lives. You could have an idea about a special medical procedure or a tool to help out, but if people don’t see it straight away, if it’s not presented well, or you know… you might not end up being as successful entrepreneur. Your business idea might flop and you just like end up bankrupt because you didn’t have the luck to find the right opportunity, the right timing to present this to the world and just hope it takes off, you know?

**Interviewer:** So in comparison to other factors, how strong is the role of luck, you think?

**Participant 14:** I don’t think it’s the main aspect of it. I don’t think you have to have luck because you can’t control luck… luck it’s like a concept that we just sort of made up ourselves. It’s not something you can quantify, you can’t be just like ‘I had X amount of luck today’, you know. But I think, I don’t know, I think luck in this situation, which is like a convergence of the time, the resources you had, you know, the state of the market, the world and it’s a whole convergence of factors. I think it’s important obviously, but you can’t really quantify it, so I can’t say like it’s the most important, no it’s not the most important, it’s a measurable with the other factors that are happening at the same time. You don’t have a lot of control over it, so I think I can’t really tell you like how much luck someone needs to have to start like a business, you know.

**Interviewer:** That’s fantastic. If someone was said to be lucky to become extremely successful, do you think that they deserve their profits?

**Participant 14:** Well, it depends. Obviously, I could refer to every single person that is extremely rich because they have a massive business as lucky, right? Because they have more luck clearly than me, because I’m not a billionaire right now. I wish. But would that mean that they don’t deserve their profits? I don’t think they don’t deserve it. At the end of the day, they still put on the work, it’s still theirs, you can’t just tell them, you’re too lucky now give all the money because you just give it back because you don’t deserve them. It’s up to them, you can’t really decide who deserves a thing of it or not, it’s theirs, it’s their work, it’s their product, their company, the profit is theirs as well.

**Interviewer:** And do you think they should be entitled to keep all of their money?

**Participant 14:** I think people are entitled to keep all their money as long as they’ve paid the stuff that they should meant to pay in terms of taxes and in terms of paying everything from their suppliers to their employees, you know, I feel like as long as you pay for everything, you’re just basically stealing money or having employees who live under minimum wage because of it, you know, as long as you pay your dues, you’re entitled to keep all your profits, you know, that remain afterwards. I don’t think people should be allowed just because they’re billionaires to be like yeah, they’re not going to pay taxes and we can’t really tell them off, they sponsor different things, different governments or whatever. I’m not sure that’s right. But yeah, If you pay everything that you’re meant to be paying, the money is yours, whatever is left is your profit, do whatever you want with it, you know?

**Interviewer:** And do you think they’re paying enough?

**Participant 14:** No. I don’t think that most are…I feel like companies, once they become this massive empire level have been allowed to get away with a lot of things that are like small businesses are not allowed to get away with. Particularly Amazon is known to not pay taxes, Facebook again has a massive like lawsuit, I don’t remember which country, not America, where they were not paying taxes. So I think there should be a way to keep them accountable, but you know, that’s why I don’t think companies should be allowed to sort of lobby politicians and stuff like that because then they tend to get away with like not paying their dues.

**Interviewer:** So, who allows it? You said they’re allowed to.

**Participant 14:** Governments. Because while should they not pay taxes, that could go into infrastructure and the people, the money gets to politicians, presidents, gets to military or like other purposes that would help them out so it’s sort of let them slide without the other stuff. Yeah, I think there should be a lot more…they should be held accountable 100%.

**Interviewer:** Great, I really appreciate your willingness to express your thoughts on this. I understand that some questions might be a bit difficult to answer. So, I’ve got one last question. Is there anything else about extreme entrepreneurial success that you would like to share but I didn’t ask?

**Participant 14:** I think that there’s one thing that always kind of annoys me. You know how I’ve said that a lot of entrepreneurs came from a mega background that are allowed to become this way. I think that those people who didn’t have to work from the absolute ground up should not be presenting the idea to like people like you and me, who don’t have It. That if you get the right, growing mindset will get you to the same level. Because it’s like a a controversy that all of us have the same 24 hours, none of us have the same opportunities, the same skills, the same chance to become the same way, so you should be selling… I don’t think entrepreneurs like really rich ones should be selling books about ‘how to become an entrepreneur like me, even though my parents are millionaires’. You know? I don’t think that should be allowed and people should listen to it, because I think it’s just sending off this false idea that everyone can just become like a billionaire tomorrow. You can’t. Unfortunately, I wish that we could. Especially like people like Elon Musk who keep saying to everyone that you should just get off your ass and do the work and you’ll be fine. No, because when you’re like struggling to pay rent and pay your bills and trying to start a business, it’s not the same as ‘I have an idea so let’s make electric card and I’ll be spending about 5 million just investing in this idea’. Like you can’t do that and I feel like people should just tell them off when they have this whole ‘oh yeah, it’s great, I work so hard, you can be like me every day, like nah. Just tell them off.

**Interviewer:** So the narrative that they’re selling are not for everyone?

**Participant 14:** Yeah, I think there’s a difference, you can’t just say that a normal person would just like does a 9-5 job and doesn’t have all those opportunities to just like ‘yeah, you can start the new Facebook tomorrow and you will be just like me, like Mark Zuckerberg.’ No, it’s not. I don’t think it’s right to sell the people the idea because people are… there are people who believe it and I don’t blame them for it but you end up in this level of… you try, you work hard, you might not succeed and you have like such a disappointment from it and it might be something that you did wrong or that there’s something wrong with you, when you tried your best and it’s not just that, like I said, there’s a million factors that can help you become a great successful entrepreneur and some of them are completely out of your control. You can’t copy what Elon Musk did, you’re not him, you’re a different person.

**Interviewer:** That’s an interesting perspective. Well thank you for sharing your thoughts in this interview. All of my interviews have been with laypeople, and I think this went particularly well. If you know someone that could contribute to my research, I would appreciate putting me in contact.

**Participant 14:** I’ll ask some friends and I’ll see if they want to do it.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, let me know.

**Participant 14: OK.**

**Interviewer:**  Great, thank you and have a good rest of the afternoon.