

A Thematic Review on Prophetic Leadership in Organisations: Analysis of Patterns and Impacts

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ABSTRACT

Prophetic leadership is a model of leadership which is primarily based on the Holy Quran and the exemplary of the Prophets' characteristics. This leadership concept is highly recommended to be practised by Muslim managers in order to achieve blessing from Allah SWT as well as worldly gain. Nevertheless, there has been a relatively small amount of research discussing the patterns in prophetic leadership publications and the positive impacts that it offers. Therefore, the aim of this thematic review paper was twofold, that was to explore the pattern of the publications that discussed prophetic leadership in organisations, and to examine the impact that may be derived from practising prophetic leadership. Three databases including Dimensions, Microsoft Academics, and Google Scholar were searched under the keywords prophetic leadership and Islam. Selected articles were reviewed and analysed using Atlas.ti8 software. The findings from the code-to-document analysis found six research themes on the patterns of publications and derived twelve sub-themes on the impacts of practising prophetic leadership. This study provided an avenue for Muslim managers to improve their leadership style from the Islamic perspective, and also benefits future researchers who would focus on Islamic management and leadership.

Keywords: *Atlas.ti., Islamic Management, Islamic Values, Prophetic Leadership, Thematic Review*

INTRODUCTION

Prophetic leadership is a model of leadership which is primarily based on the Holy Quran and the exemplary of the Prophets' characteristics. It refers to the ability to control oneself and influence others

to achieve common goals as practised by the Prophets (Fitriana, 2020; Hadiyani et al., 2021). The prophetic leadership model was dated back to previous civilisations and involves the leadership of all prophets towards their followers (Ahmad, 2019). However, in this paper, prophetic leadership refers to the leadership practiced by Prophet Muhammad SAW through the four basic values that underlined His leadership namely *siddiq* (honest), *amanah* (trust), *fathonah* (intelligent), and *tabligh* (telling the truth) (Dewantoro et al., 2021).

The leadership practiced by Prophet Muhammad is an illustration of ideal leadership. Allah SWT elevated Him as a mercy to all mankind (*Rahmatan-lil- 'Aālamīn*) (Al-Anbiya' 21:107). Accordingly, His noble characteristics have been described by Allah SWT as "*uswatun hasana*" (a good example, for anyone who looks forward to (please) Allah) (Al-Ahzab 33:21), "who was sent to lead (those whom He know will be) those who believe and do good deeds - from darkness (of disbelief) into light (of guidance)" (At-Talaq 65:11). Therefore, Prophet Muhammad is indeed the best role model for Muslims which aim to seek the blessings of Allah SWT in all aspects of life.

Despite its importance, prophetic leadership is not as popular as compared to conventional leadership theories. In fact, several studies highlighted the inclination of Muslim leaders towards conventional leadership theories over the Islamic leadership concept (Dewi, 2019; Rosyidi, 2017). The influence of conventional leadership theories through the philosophy of materialism and egocentric motives has resulted in many unethical practices, (Dewantoro et al., 2021; Septiawati, 2018; Amran et al., 2020; Aminuddin et al. 2016) which are against the Islamic teachings and principles (Hamid & Juliansyahzen, 2017). In addition, although prophetic leadership is an important concept to be practiced and internalised by Muslims, there is a dearth of study on prophetic leadership, particularly on its practical side (Ahmad, 2019). Most studies are conceptual in nature and concentrated on educational sectors with less attention given to the other sectors (Fitriana, 2020).

Owing to that, the study on prophetic leadership seems very important and relevant. Therefore, the objectives of this study are (1) to explore the pattern of prophetic leadership publications from the year 2010 to 2021 to be recommended for future studies and (2) to examine the impact of practising prophetic leadership among managers or leaders in Muslim-owned or Islamic organisations.

METHODOLOGY

Thematic review method using *Atlas.ti8* as introduced by Zairul (2020) was applied in this study. The review method used the thematic analysis procedure of (Clarke and Braun, 2013) using *Atlas.ti8*. In order to identify the pattern and construct relevant themes from selected literature. In this study, the selected literature was reviewed and analysed to find the pattern of prophetic leadership publications and the impact of practising prophetic leadership in organisations. Then, the patterns and impacts were constructed as themes.

The selection of literature was performed according to inclusion and exclusion criteria (Table 1). Firstly, in terms of literature type, this study limited the search to only journal articles with empirical evidence. This suggests that the other types of sources like review articles, concept papers, conference proceedings, news reports, book series, books, chapter-in-book, and dissertations were excluded from this review. The reason for limiting to only journals with empirical data was due to the abundance of conceptual studies on prophetic leadership. Thus, this study would like to only focus on the practical aspects of the subject which were found to receive less attention compared to the conceptual ones. Therefore, this would help in determining the actual impact of practising prophetic leadership in Muslim-owned and Islamic organisations. Secondly, this study limited its search to articles written in the English and Malay languages only. Thirdly, a period of 12 years was chosen, from 2010 till 13 November 2021, to allow for more relevant articles to be discovered.

Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Eligibility	Exclusion
Literature type	Journal (empirical research)	Review articles, concept papers, conference proceedings, news reports, book series, books, chapter-in-book, and dissertations
Language	English and Malay	Other languages
Timeline	Between 2010 to 2021	<2010

The sources of the data were extracted from Microsoft Academics, Dimensions, and Google Scholar searches. Microsoft Academics and Dimensions were good alternatives to Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) (Martín-Martín et al., 2021) since the initial search conducted on the leading databases found very limited studies on prophetic leadership and the fact that there were no articles that suited the context of this study. Meanwhile, Google Scholar, though not equipped with advanced search features (Houshyar & Sotudeh, 2018) as other leading databases, provided the largest amount of articles or documents (389 million) (Gusenbauer, 2019). Furthermore, Google Scholar is structurally non-biased against research produced in non-Western countries, non-English language research, and research from the arts, humanities, and social sciences (Tennant, 2020). The following keywords were used as search terms for this study (Table 2).

Table 2: Search Strings

Database	Search String	Result
Microsoft Academic	(prophetic leader OR prophetic leadership) AND islam, document types: articles AND publication year: >2009	39
Dimensions	(prophetic leader OR prophetic leadership) AND islam (Title Abstract), Publication year: >2009, Publication type: article	26
Google Scholar	"prophetic leadership" AND "islam" AND "organization" year: 2010-2021 "kepimpinan" AND "profetik" AND "islam" AND "organisasi" year: 2010-2021	418

The initial search of the three databases resulted in 39 articles from Microsoft Academics, 26 articles from Dimensions, and 418 articles from Google Scholar search. However, 444 articles were then removed, since they were not eligible according to the inclusion criteria. For instance, some of them were review articles, proceedings, and dissertations, while most of the articles were concept papers. In addition, this stage also removed articles that did not concentrate on prophetic leadership by leaders or managers in organisations and articles that discussed prophetic leadership in other religions. The remaining 39 articles were then uploaded to Mendeley for data crunching to identify duplicates as well as to ensure that all the metadata of the selected articles were correct. This process further removed seven duplicated articles which finally resulted in 32 articles eligible for thematic review (Figure 1). Next, the articles were exported to *Atlas.ti8* for thematic analysis on the publication patterns and impacts of prophetic leadership in the literature.

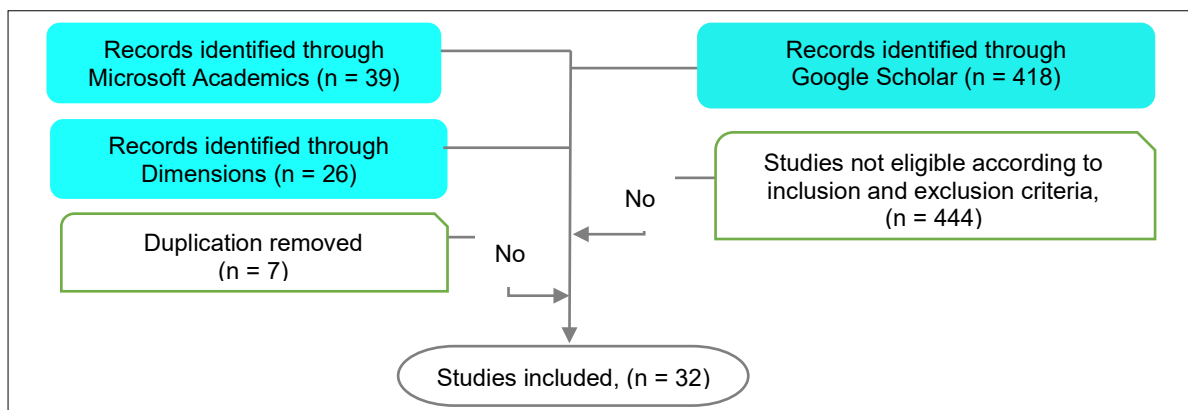


Figure 1: Summary of the Searching and Selection Process

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section is divided into two sub-sections. The first sub-section reports analysis of the pattern of prophetic leadership publications to answer the first research objective (RO1). Meanwhile, the second sub-section discusses the themes resulting from RO2, which were in regards to the impact of practising prophetic leadership in Muslim-owned or Islamic organisations.

Pattern of Prophetic Leadership Publications

Publication Trend

There has been an increasing trend of publication on prophetic leadership subjects over the years. From only one article in the year 2013, the publication increased annually to ten publications in 2021 (up to 13 November 2021) (Figure 2). Although this study applied a 12-year timeline (2010 till 2021), it was discovered that journals (with empirical research) regarding prophetic leadership in Muslim-owned or Islamic organisations were very limited and only evidenced since the year 2013. In addition, most research was dominated by Indonesian scholars (30 studies, 94%).

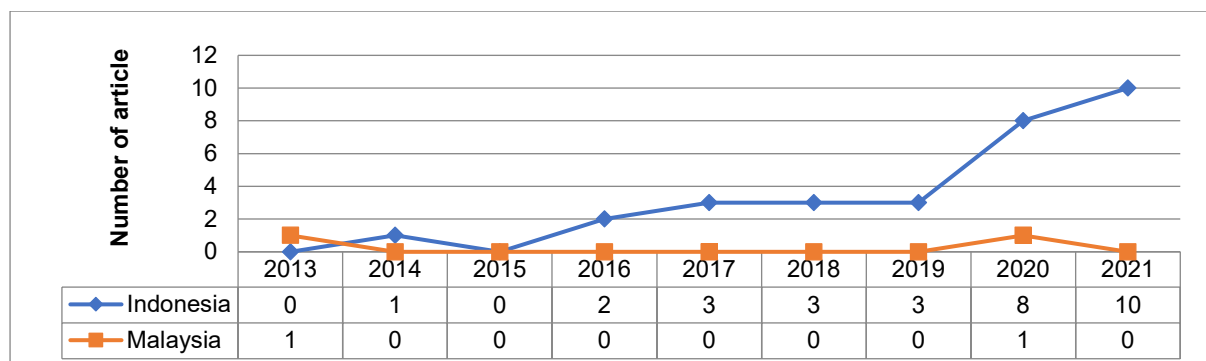


Figure 2: Distribution of Articles According to Country of Study and Year of Publication

Sector Studied

In terms of the sector of the studies conducted, it was found that the majority of the empirical studies on prophetic leadership focused on the education sector (Figure 3). This instance was due to the abundance of Islamic schools and institutions in Indonesia. Additionally, the term “prophetic leadership” was introduced in Indonesia by Kuntowijoyo (1943-2005) through a social prophetic paradigm that he proposed in his book published in 1991 (Ahimsa-Putra, 2019). Subsequently, this new paradigm has resulted in the evolution of studies on prophetic leadership from various perspectives, especially in Indonesia.

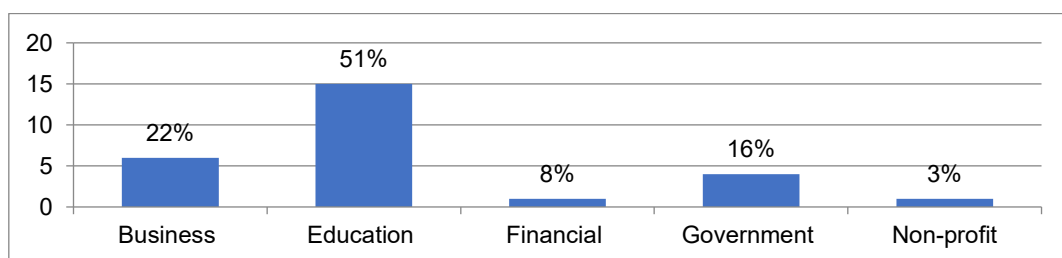


Figure 3: Sector of Study

Study Design

Next, with regards to study design, most of the studies (19, 59%) applied a qualitative approach, while 13 studies (41%) used a quantitative approach (Figure 4).

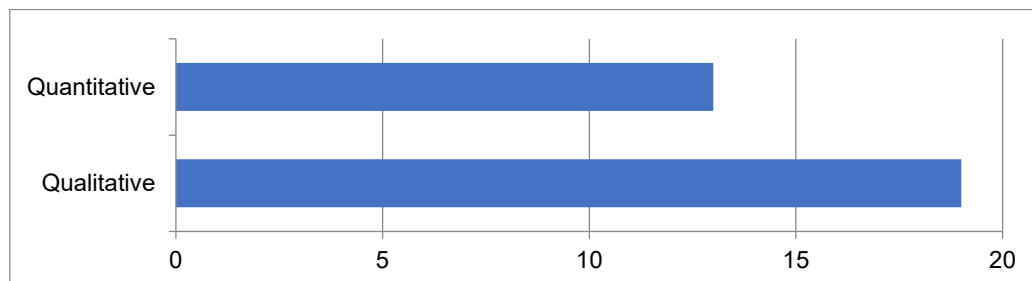


Figure 4: Types of Study Design

Journal Publication

In terms of the distribution of articles, it was found that there are several journals chosen by scholars for their publications on the prophetic leadership issue (Table 3).

Table 3: Distribution of Articles According to Journal and Year of Publication

Journal	Year	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
	Al-Idarah: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam								
BESTARI								1	
Edukasia Islamika: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam						1			
Ijtimaiyya: Jurnal Pengembangan Masyarakat Islam							1		
International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology								1	
International Journal of Business and Management Studies		1							
International Journal of Business and Social Science								1	
International Journal of Library Information Network									1
International Journal of Management and Administrative Sciences					1				
Istawa: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam							1		
Journal of Business and Behavioural Entrepreneurship								1	
Journal of Digital Business Management									1
Journal of Psychological Science and Profession									1
Journal of Xi'an University of Architecture & Technology								1	
Jurnal Administrasi dan Manajemen Pendidikan							1		
Jurnal Ecopsy						1			
Jurnal Ilmiah CIVIS								1	
Jurnal Ilmiah Penelitian Psikologi: Kajian Empiris & Non-Empiris				1	1				
Jurnal Intervensi Psikologi			1						
Jurnal Manajemen dan Tarbiyatul Islam								1	
Jurnal Pendidikan Islam					1				
Jurnal Psikologi				1					
Jurnal Psikologi Talenta						1			
Jurnal Riset Manajemen								1	
Manajemen Bisnis									1
Millah: Jurnal Studi Agama									1
Oetoesan-Hindia: Telaah Pemikiran Kebangsaan								1	
Society									1

Syntax Literate: Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia									2
TARAADIN									1

Publication Theme

Meanwhile, in terms of the themes of publication, this study discovered six research themes with the most frequency in prophetic leadership publication. The themes were impact, application, internalisation, supporting or inhibiting factor, model, and role of leader. The developed themes are illustrated as a network in Figure 5.

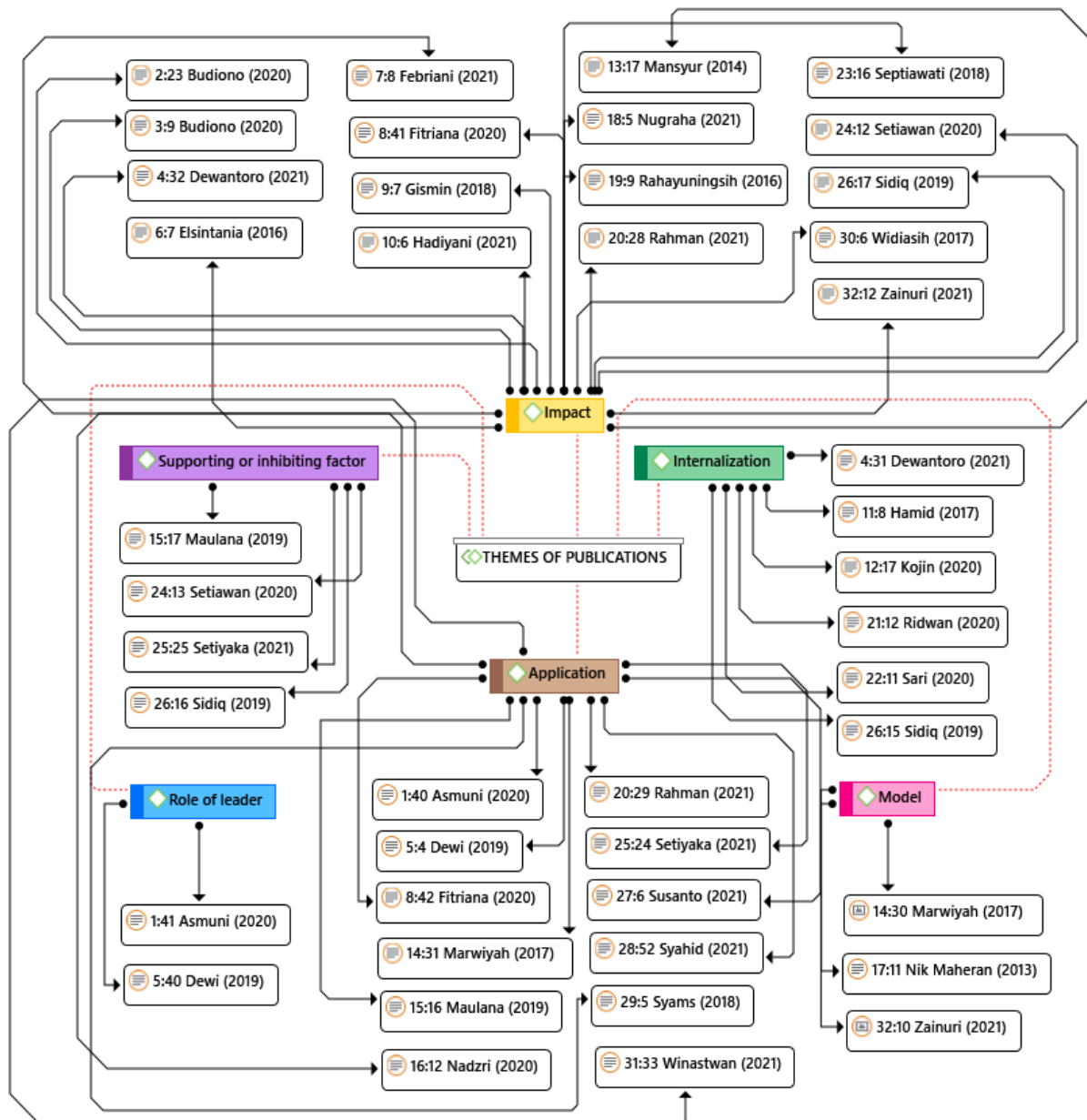


Figure 5: Network View of Themes of Publications (According to Author of the Selected Articles)

This study found that the impact of practising prophetic leadership was the most popular theme studied with a total of 17 publications since the year 2014. The next popular theme was application, which recorded 12 publications. Please note that the application theme in this study refers to the

application of the four basic prophetic leadership values (*siddiq*, *amanah*, *fathonah*, and *tabligh*) as discussed in the literature. On the other hand, internalisation recorded six, supporting or inhibiting factor recorded four publications, while model and role of leaders recorded three and two publications respectively (Figure 6). Overall, although the impact theme was recorded as the most frequent theme discussed in the literature, the total number of publications for the theme was not very promising. However, it did provide a signal of the gradual attention towards prophetic leadership publications.

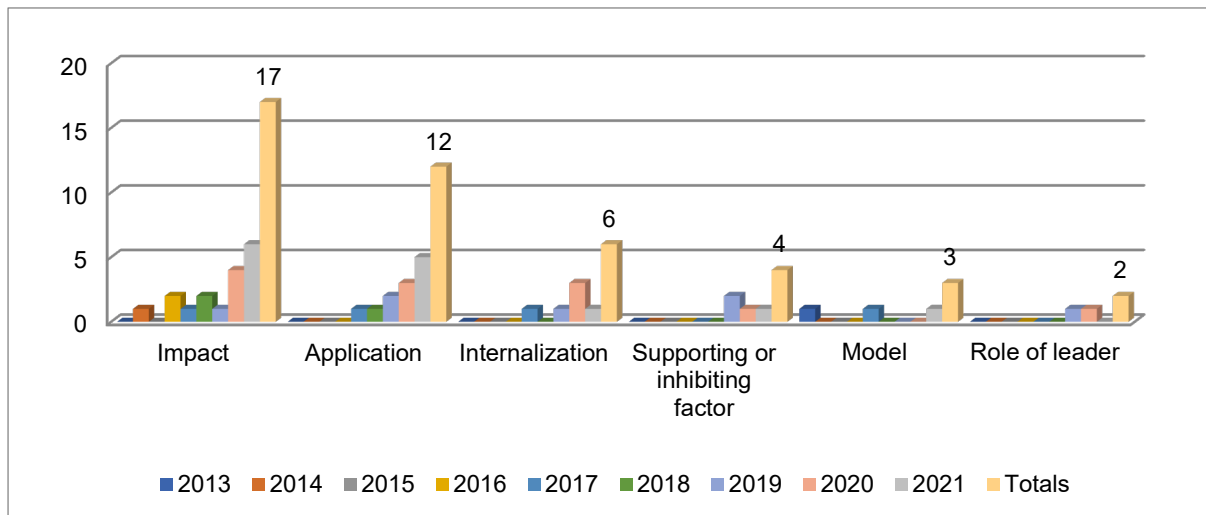


Figure 6: Distribution of Articles According to Themes and Year of Publication

Impact of Prophetic Leadership

Thematic review conducted on the 17 articles which discussed the impact theme discovered twelve sub-themes based on the directions and subject of the articles (Table 4). For instance, a study by Febriani (2021) indicated that the application of prophetic leadership values of *siddiq*, *amanah*, *fathonah*, and *tabligh* results in increasing workplace spirituality, organisational culture, and performance in the organisation studied. The study asserted that *fathonah* is the prophetic leadership value that must be put at a higher priority compared to the others due to its greater influence and need for Muslim entrepreneurs. Therefore, it is vital for Muslim entrepreneurs to continuously engage in enhancing the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for their business sustainability. This finding is consistent with prior studies which also highlighted the influence of prophetic leadership on workplace spirituality (Budiono et al., 2020b, 2020a), though in different settings.

The study conducted by Budiono et al. (2020b) at an Islamic boarding school concluded that the positive influence of prophetic leadership on workplace spirituality at the school was due to regular Islamic teachings led by the leaders (Budiono et al., 2020b). While, further study by Budiono in the same school reported that prophetic leadership also led to innovative behaviour and engagement among the employees (educators) due to the trust that they have in the leaders (Budiono et al., 2020a). Therefore, the study asserted the importance of leaders in instilling *amanah* values in their leadership. On another note, Gismin and Mansyur (2018) examined the effect of prophetic, spiritual, and transformational leadership on organisational commitment and work productivity. The results of the study revealed the dominance of prophetic and spiritual leadership on the positive impact achieved. Accordingly, prior studies also discovered the positive influence of prophetic leadership on organisational commitment. For example, a study by Elsintania and Archianti (2016) on four business organisations reported that effective communication by leaders (*tabligh*) provides the greatest contribution towards the increase in organisational commitment among the employees. The study

indicated *tabligh* elements such as the delivery of accurate information and assertive and ethical behaviour performed by leaders as indicators of such instance.

**Table 4: The Synthesis Matrix of Impact Sub-themes According to Author
(of the selected articles)**

Author	Study design	Sub-themes											
		Workplace Spirituality	Behaviour	Performance	Organizational Commitment	Productivity	Career Development	Organizational Citizenship Behaviour	Decision Making	Job Satisfaction	Professionalism	Employee Engagement	Islamic Organizational Culture
(Budiono et al., 2020a)	QN	√	√									√	
(Budiono et al., 2020b)	QN	√											
(Dewantoro et al., 2021)	QL		√	√									
(Elsintania & Archianti, 2016)	QN				√								
(Febriani, 2021)	QN	√		√									√
(Fitriana, 2020)	QL						√						
(Gismin & Mansyur, 2018)	QN				√	√							
(Hadiyani et al., 2021)	QN						√						
(Mansyur, 2014)	QN					√							
(Nugraha et al., 2021)	QN					√							
(Rahayuningsih, 2016)	QN				√								√
(Rahman & Hamdi, 2021)	QL							√					
(Septiawati, 2018)	QN								√				
(Setiawan & Aminudin 2020)	QL									√			
(Sidiq & 'Uyun, 2019)	QL		√										
(Widiasih, 2017)	QN										√		
(Zainuri et al., 2021)	QN			√									

QN = Quantitative; QL = Qualitative

Meanwhile, there were studies that highlighted the significant influence of prophetic leadership in making effective decisions such as decisions related to financial management and facilities utilisation (Rahman & Hamdi, 2021) and in designing training and development, promotion, and transfer programs as part of the career development programs for the employees (Fitriana, 2020). Accordingly, the values of *siddiq*, *amanah*, *fathonah*, and *tabligh* guide the leaders in forming a system that is innovative and progressive which in turn enhances the quality of the organisation and the level of professionalism among employees (Setiawan & Aziz, 2020). Figure 7 provides a web mapping of article distributions according to the impact sub-themes.



Figure 7: Distribution of Articles According to Impact Theme

Overall, this finding indicated several positive impacts of prophetic leadership as realised in the organisations. As a result, this provides an avenue for Muslim managers to improve their leadership styles accordingly. Indeed, the effort to instill Islamic values in leadership is important to curb ethical crises that are currently at an alarming rate (Aldulaimi, 2016). Leaders who are the key people in organisations play a very significant part as a role model to their employees (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2016; Nisar et al., 2020). Therefore, by practising good ethical values through leadership by examples, they would be able to provide a huge impact on their employees and on their overall organisations' performance in turn.

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to analyse the existing literature on prophetic leadership. The findings of this study revealed that empirical research related to Islamic leadership, particularly on prophetic leadership is limited. The findings from the code-to-document analysis in *Atlas.ti8* indicated six research themes that were of most frequency in prophetic leadership publications, namely, impact, application, internalisation, supporting or inhibiting factor, model, and role of leader. In addition, this study also derived a total of twelve sub-themes for impact themes as highlighted in the seventeen studies which focus on the matter.

There are several limitations of this study. Firstly, this study surrounded the exact terminology used for the literature search. Therefore, some articles related to prophetic leadership which used other terms might have been missed. Secondly, this study only included journal articles with empirical data. Thereby, other sources that also have empirical data such as proceedings and dissertations may have been overlooked in this review. Thirdly, this study was limited to articles written only in English and Malay language. Therefore, articles in other languages such as Arabic which were also associated with Islamic leadership issues might have been overlooked as well. Fourthly, 64% of the studies which focus on the impact themes were quantitatively designed. Therefore, this suggests the need for future studies to be conducted using qualitative methods to get more elaborative results.

Nonetheless, the analysis presented in this study signified a number of aspects. First, it provided insights into the patterns of publication of prophetic leadership. Consequently, offering understanding, knowledge, and research gaps that will benefit the future research direction. Second, it discovered several positive impacts that might be gained by practising prophetic leadership in organisations. Subsequently, promoting the need to practice and internalise prophetic leadership values in

organisations. This is important to attain success through quality leadership, and most importantly to receive blessings from Allah SWT.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Rahman, S.S.A. conceived and designed the study, conducted the analysis, and wrote the manuscript. Senik, Z.C, Hassan, W.Z.W, Yaacob, S.E, and Zakaria, Z provided critical feedback and helped shape the research, analysis, and manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

We certify that the article is the Authors' and Co-Authors' original work. The article has not received prior publication and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. This research/manuscript has not been submitted for publication nor has it been published in whole or in part elsewhere. We testify to the fact that all Authors have contributed significantly to the work, validity, and legitimacy of the data and its interpretation for submission to Jurnal Intelek.

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