

## A Thematic Review on Prophetic Leadership: Analysis of Publication Patterns from 2010 Till 2021

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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. Prophetic leadership has been theoretically and practically proven to improve the quality of leadership in organizations. However, despite its importance, there have been relatively small amount of research discussing the patterns in prophetic leadership publications. Therefore, this thematic review aims to explore the pattern of the publications from 2010 till 2021 that discussed on prophetic leadership in Muslim-owned or Islamic organizations. Three databases including Dimensions, Microsoft Academics, and Google Scholar were searched under the keywords prophetic leadership and Islam. The findings from the code-to-document analysis using Atlas.ti8 found the patterns of publications which were grouped into six main themes namely 1) impact; 2) application; 3) internalization; 4) supporting or inhibiting factor; 5) model; and 6) role of leader. This study offered several significant contributions for practical purposes, for the body of knowledge, and for recommendations of future studies on prophetic leadership.

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

### 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 basic values underlined in prophetic leadership are *siddiq* (honest),

*amanah* (trust), *fathonah* (intelligent), and *tabligh* (telling the truth)(Dewantoro et al., 2021). According to Kuntowijoyo (2008), leaders who apply prophetic leadership will be able to uphold the values of humanization (enforcing goodness), liberation (preventing all forms of evil) and transcendence (belief in Allah SWT) (Sari & Arif, 2020).The leadership practiced by Prophet Muhammad is an illustration of the ideal leadership. He is the greatest and the most influential leader in the world history (Ma'sum, 2020). 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).

Despite the importance of prophetic leadership to be practised by Muslim leaders, there is a lack of study on prophetic leadership, particularly on its practical side. Most studies are conceptual in nature and concentrated on educational sectors (Fitriana, 2020). In addition, many people tend to refer to conventional leadership theories which are more popular as compared to Islamic leadership concept (Dewi, 2019b; Rosyidi, 2017). In fact, it was reported that the influence of conventional leadership through the philosophy of materialism and egocentric motives has resulted to many unethical practices (Aminuddin et al., 2016; Amran et al., 2020; Dewantoro et al., 2021; Jaelani, 2019; Nasukah et al., 2020; Septiawati, 2018). This situation is very unfortunate since leadership in Islam has some unique roles as it is concerned with both worldly matters and the Hereafter, and it is legitimized by religious teachings as a duty to be held accountable (Hamid & Juliansyahzen, 2017). Hence, the objectives of this study are:

- to explore the pattern of prophetic leadership publications from the year 2010 to 2021 to be recommended for future studies and,
- to set the direction of prophetic leadership in both theoretical and practical use.

### **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.ti. In this study, the selected literatures were reviewed and analysed in order to find the pattern of prophetic leadership publications and to construct relevant themes. The selection of literature was performed according to several criteria (Table 1). Firstly, in terms of literature type this study limits search to only journal articles with empirical evidence. The reason is in order to get first hand information from the practitioners regarding the prophetic leadership concepts as applied in their organizations. Secondly, in terms of language, this study included articles written in English and Malay language only. This is because most leading journals are published in English, while quite a number of studies on Islamic management were written in Malay language. Thirdly, with regards to time line, a period of 12 years were chosen (year 2010 till 13 November 2021) to allow for more relevant articles to be discovered. This is due to the dearth of empirical publications on prophetic leadership in Islamic and Muslim-owned organizations and in line with the concept of study maturity by (Kraus et al., 2020).

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
Time line	Between 2010 to 2021	<2010

The sources of literature were the research databases from Microsoft Academics, Dimensions, and Google Scholar. Microsoft Academics and Dimensions were chosen because the databases are good alternatives to Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) since both cover many subject categories (Martín-Martín et al., 2021). Moreover, Dimensions is the most exhaustive database whereby about 96.61% of the journals indexed in WoS are also indexed in Dimensions (Singh et al., 2021). On the other hand, Google Scholar is among the popular searching database, which has the largest amount of articles or documents (389 million) (Gusenbauer, 2019). Although Google Scholar has several limitations (Gusenbauer & Haddaway, 2020) such as in terms of quality control (Halevi et al., 2017) and advanced search features (Houshyar & Sotudeh, 2018) it is a strong supporting database (Haddaway et al., 2015). In fact, 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 to 39 articles from Microsoft Academics, 26 from Dimensions, and 418 articles from Google Scholar search. However, 444 articles were then removed since they did not fulfil the inclusion criteria and out of the scope of this study. For instance, some of the articles were excluded because they were non-journal (most of them were conceptual papers), focus on the prophetic leadership by students (not by leaders in organizations), and discuss on prophetic leadership in other religions. The remaining 39 articles were then uploaded in the Mendeley for data crunching in order to identify duplicates as well as to ensure that all the metadata of the selected articles were correct. This process discovered seven duplicate articles which were then removed. Therefore, the final article to be reviewed down to 32 articles (Figure 1). Next, the articles were exported to Atlas.ti8 for thematic analysis.

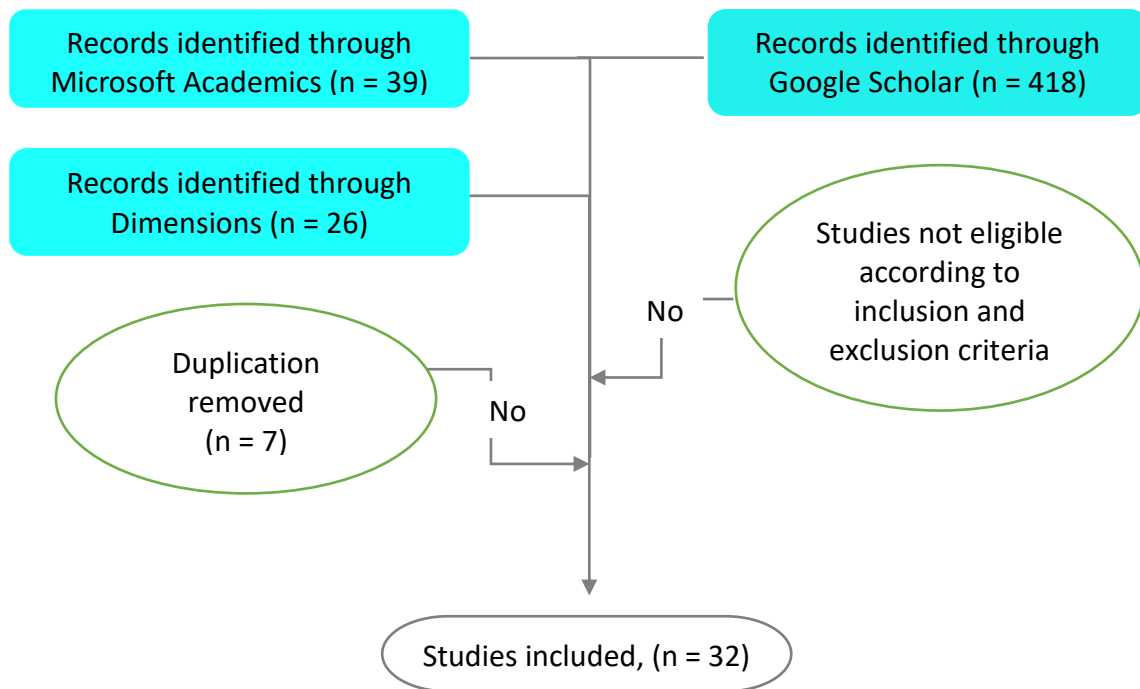


Figure 1. Summary of the searching and selection process

### Result and Discussion

This section is divided into two sub-sections. The first sub-section will report the background of the selected articles, while the second sub-section will discuss the themes derived from the thematic review on the prophetic leadership publications.

#### Background of the Articles

This section explains on the background of the 32 articles in terms of country of study, year of publication, study design, and sector of study. As for the countries the studies were predominantly conducted, it was found that majority of the studies (30 studies; 93.8%) were conducted in Indonesia, while only two studies conducted in Malaysia. Next, regarding years published, one article was published in 2013 and 2014, two articles were published in 2016, and three studies were published in 2017, 2018, and 2019. Meanwhile, nine studies was published in 2020, and ten studies was published in 2021 (up to 13 November 2021). Though there seems an increasing trend in prophetic leadership publication (empirical research), the trend was slow and the studies were conducted mostly by Indonesian scholars (Figure 2).

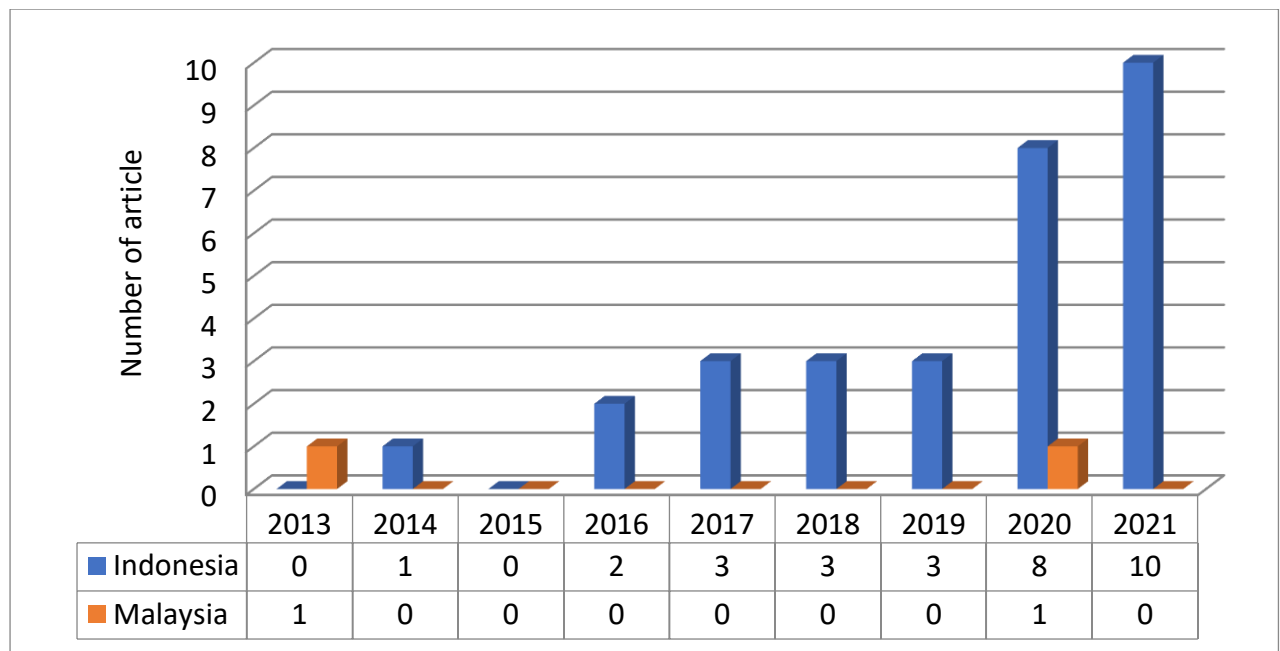


Figure 2. Distribution of articles according to country of study and year of publication

Consequently, word cloud was generated on the 32 articles in order to test the frequency of words mentioned in the articles. The word cloud in Figure 3 captured ‘*kepemimpinan*’ as the biggest word which was mostly mentioned in the articles (1532 times), while its equivalent ‘*leadership*’ mentioned 1506 times, giving a total of 3038 mentions. Meanwhile, the second biggest word was ‘*profetik*’ (795 times) which when combined with terms ‘*prophetic*’ (791 times) totalled to 1586 mentions. The word cloud indirectly confirms the popularity of prophetic leadership research among Indonesian scholars as evidenced in the word cloud which shows that majority of the words mentioned in the selected articles were in Indonesian language. For example *pesantren* (boarding school), *manajemen* (management), *kepala* (leader), and *karyawan* (employees). Furthermore, the word ‘*Indonesia*’ and ‘*Yogyakarta*’ also appeared in the word cloud which also approved the findings.



Figure 3. Word cloud generated from the 32 articles

With regards to study design, most of the studies (59%) applied a qualitative approach, while 41 percent used a quantitative approach (Figure 4). Meanwhile, in terms of the sector the studies, it was found that majority of the empirical study on prophetic leadership focus on education sector (51%) (Figure 5). This instance was partly due to the abundant establishment of Islamic education schools or institutions in Indonesia. Therefore, majority of the studies focused on such sector.

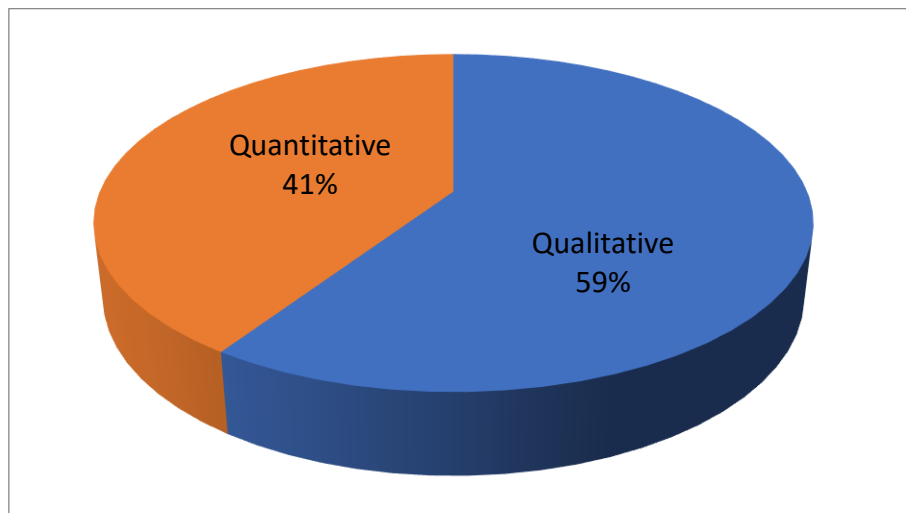


Figure 4. Types of study design

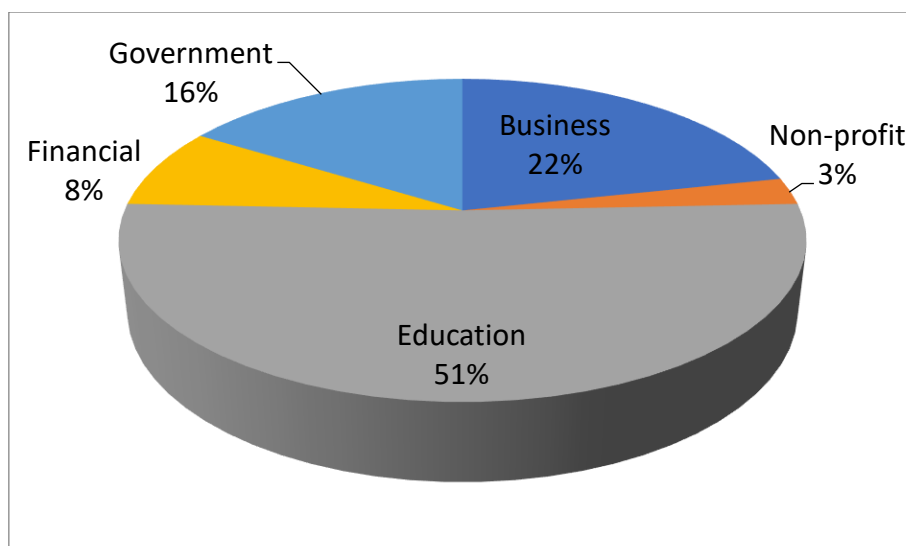


Figure 5. Sector of study

### Themes of the Articles

Thematic review of the 32 articles was conducted using Atlas.ti8 software. After several rounds of coding, re-coding, and code merging process, six research themes with most frequency in prophetic leadership publication were established based on the directions and subject of the articles. The themes are impact, application, internalization, supporting or inhibiting factor, model, and role of leader (Table 3).

Table 3. The Synthesis Matrix of Publications Themes According to Author (of the 32 Selected Articles)

Authors	Themes					
	Impact	Application	Internalization	Supporting or inhibiting	Model	Role of leader
Asmuni (2020)		√				√
Budiono et al (2020a)	√					
Budiono et al (2020b)	√					
Dewantoro et al (2021)	√		√			
Dewi (2019a)		√				√
Elsintania & Archianti (2016)	√					
Febriani (2021)	√					
Fitriana (2020)	√	√				
Gismin & Mansyur (2018)	√					
Hadiyani et al (2021)	√					
Hamid & Juliansyahzen (2017)			√			
Kojin et al (2020)			√			
Mansyur (2014)	√					
Marwiyah et al (2017)		√			√	
Maulana et al (2019)		√		√		
Nadzri et al (2020)		√				
Nik Maheran & Shahra (2013)					√	
Nugraha et al (2021)	√					
Rahayuningsih (2016)	√					
Rahman & Hamdi (2021)	√	√				
Ridwan et al (2020)			√			
Sari & Arif (2020)			√			
Septiawati (2018)	√					
Setiawan & Aziz (2020)	√			√		
Setiyaka et al (2021)		√		√		
Sidiq & 'Uyun (2019)	√		√	√		
Susanto et al (2021)		√				
Syahid & Fitri (2021)		√				
Syams (2018)		√				
Widiasih (2017)	√					
Winastwan & Nurdin (2021)		√				
Zainuri et al (2021)	√				√	
Totals	17	12	6	4	3	2

*Impact*

As shown in Table 3, most of the studies focus on the impact of prophetic leadership implementation in organizations (17 studies). The impact include improvement in workplace spirituality (Budiono et al., 2020a, 2020b; Febriani, 2021), behaviour (Budiono et al., 2020a; Dewantoro et al., 2021; Sidiq & 'Uyun, 2019) performance (Dewantoro et al., 2021; Zainuri et al., 2021), organizational commitment (Elsintania & Archianti, 2016; Gismin & Mansyur, 2018; Rahayuningsih, 2016), productivity (Gismin & Mansyur, 2018; Mansyur, 2014; Nugraha et al., 2021), career development (Fitriana, 2020), organizational citizenship behaviour (Hadiyani et al., 2021), decision making (Rahman & Hamdi, 2021), job satisfaction (Septiawati, 2018), professionalism (Setiawan & Aziz, 2020), employee engagement (Budiono et al., 2020a; Widiasih, 2017), and Islamic organizational culture (Febriani, 2021) (Table 4).

For instance, Gismin and Mansyur (2018) examine the effect of prophetic, spiritual, and transformational leadership on organizational commitment and work productivity. Results of the study revealed joint effect of the three leadership style on improvement in both domains. The result further indicated the dominance of prophetic and spiritual leadership on the positive impact achieved. Meanwhile, study conducted by Fitriana (2020) found significant impact of prophetic leadership values practiced on the implementation of training and development, promotion, and transfer programs which are parts of employee development programs in the organization. Furthermore, the practice of prophetic leadership values greatly affects the level of professionalism of employees and the quality of the organization. The prophetic values of *siddiq*, *amanah*, *fathonah*, and *tabligh*, provide the leader with authority and strategic steps in forming a system that is innovative, progressive and always guided by the prophetic values (Setiawan & Aziz, 2020). Thus, it can be inferred that the practice of such noble characters by leaders has high sociological impact on the employees and the organization as a whole, which will then bring positive influence to the society and the surrounding (Kasim et al., 2020).

Overall, this thematic review provides a better understanding of several positive impacts that can be realized by practising prophetic leadership in organizations (Table 4 and Figure 6). However, most of the studies which focus on the impact factors are quantitatively designed (71%) (Table 4). Thus the findings simply indicated the influence of prophetic leadership on organizations without making further elaboration on the practical aspect. Hence, there is a great need to have more qualitative publications regarding this matter.



Table 4. The synthesis matrix of impact sub-themes according to author (of the 17 articles)

Author	Study design	Sub-themes											
		Workplace spirituality	Behaviour	Performance	Organizational	Productivity	Career development	Organizational	Decision making	Job satisfaction	Professionalism	Employee engagement	Islamic organizational
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

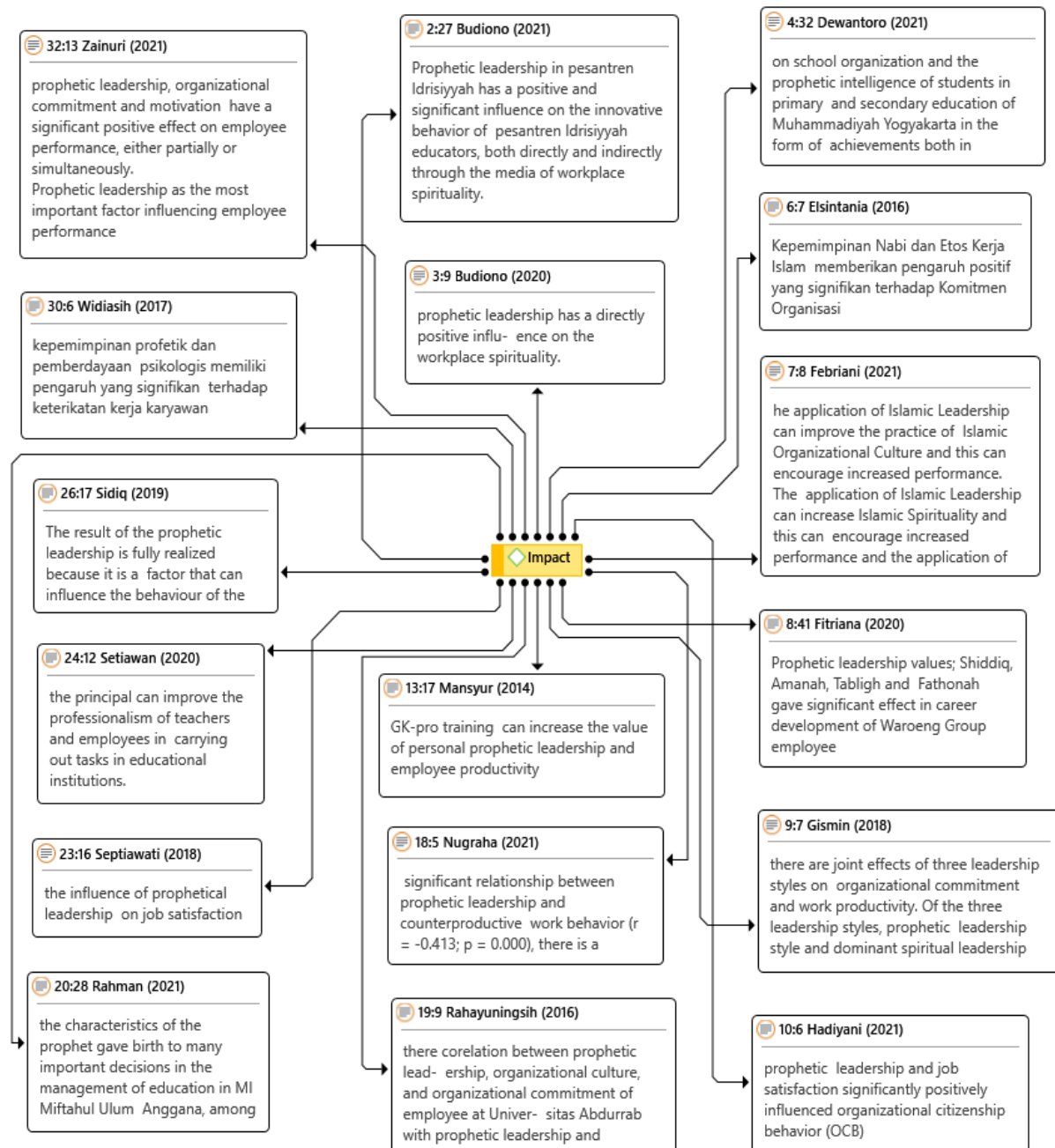


Figure 6. Network view on the impact theme

### Application

From the 12 studies which discussed on the application of prophetic leadership values (*siddiq, amanah, fathonah, tabligh*) (Table 3), most of the studies focused on education sector while the rest of the studies concentrated on business and government sectors (Table 5). It was evident in this study that all of the studies which discussed on prophetic leadership practice in education sector discovered that such leadership values benefit a lot in improving the performance of the schools or institutions in various aspect, as discussed in previous theme (impact) (Table 4). For instance, the practice of prophetic leadership by the leaders led to a positive effect such as increase in employees' commitment (Syams, 2018) and togetherness (Maulana et al., 2019), as well as improvement in the management systems (Rahman & Hamdi, 2021).

Table 5. The Synthesis matrix of sector of study according to author, year, title (of the 12 articles)

Author, Year, Title	Sector of Study		
	Business	Education	Government
Asmuni (2020) - Kepemimpinan islami dalam manajemen lembaga pendidikan		√	
Dewi (2019) - Implementasi nilai-nilai profetik dalam kepemimpinan modern pada manajemen kinerja di perguruan tinggi Islam swasta Kota Metro		√	
Fitriana (2020) - Prophetic leadership dalam pengembangan karir karyawan di Waroeng Group	√		
Marwiyah et al (2017) - Analysis of leadership style in corruption prevention in Probolinggo, East Java, Indonesia			√
Maulana et al (2019) - Kepemimpinan profetik Islam oleh kepala madrasah		√	
Nadzri et al (2020) - Characteristics of trust among successful entrepreneurs in the catering services industry in Malaysia	√		
Rahman & Hamdi (2021) - Analisis kepemimpinan profetik dalam manajemen berbasis sekolah di MI Miftahul Ulum Anggana		√	
Setiyaka et al (2021) - Kepimpinan profetik Bupati Sleman saat pandemi covid-19			√
Susanto et al (2021) - Kepimpinan profetik satgas penanganan covid-19 di kota Yogyakarta			√
Syahid & Fitri (2021) - Implementasi prophetic leadership pada UMKM (Studi kasus pada Ayam Geprek Juara Rawamangun Jakarta Timur)	√		
Syams (2018) - Implementasi prophetic leadership di MI Nurul Ulum Bantul		√	
Winastwan & Nurdin (2021) - Prophetic values in library leadership at Islamic University of Indonesia		√	

In a similar manner, the practice of prophetic leadership in business sector contributes effectively in establishing good relationship with the shareholders, investors, and the employees (Syahid & Fitri, 2021). In addition, good relationship also established with the community through sustaining their well-being in the form of charity activities and zakat obligation (Syahid & Fitri, 2021). On the other hand, study by Fitriana (2020) concentrated on the influence of prophetic leadership on career development of the employees. The findings of the study revealed the significant effect of prophetic leadership values on training and development activities, as well as in promotion and transfer process in the sample company.

Meanwhile, recent studies by Setiyaka et al (2021); Susanto et al (2021) discussed on the application of *siddiq*, *amanah*, *fathonah*, *tabligh* by the respective ministries and leaders who were in charge in dealing with the current phenomenon of covid-19 in Indonesia. It was evident that prophetic leadership was effective in dealing with the crisis whereby *fathonah* aspect was indicated as the prominent value needed as compared to the other three values (Susanto et al., 2021). Therefore, it is of vital need for a leader to be able to make wise and

quick decision in this uncertain and unsafe situation, while at the same time meeting the need of the stakeholders (Setiyaka et al., 2021; Susanto et al., 2021).

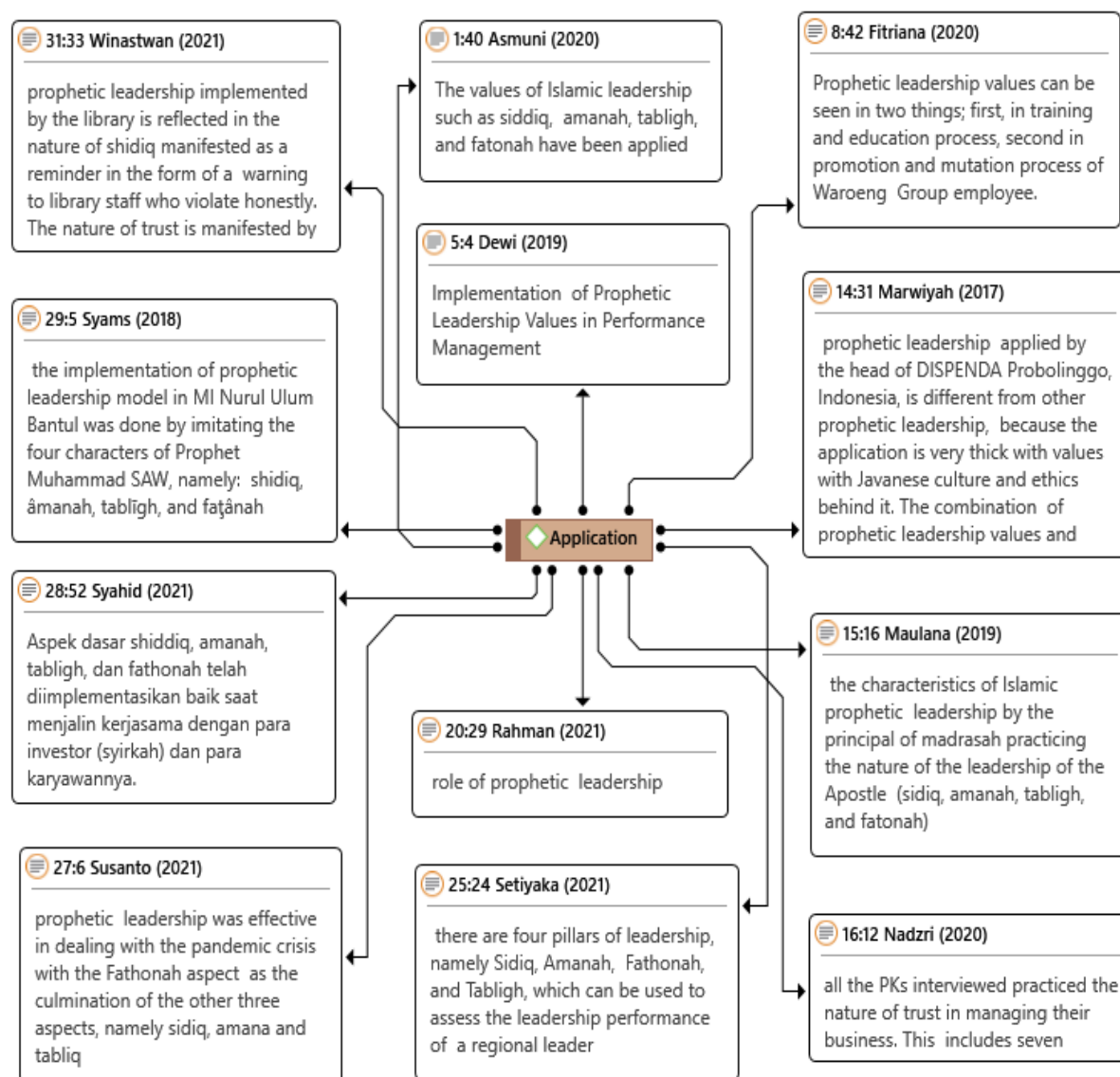


Figure 7. Network view on the application theme

### Internalization

From the total of 32 included studies, only six studies concentrate on internalization of prophetic leadership in organization (Dewantoro et al., 2021; Hamid & Juliansyahzen, 2017; Kojin et al., 2020; Ridwan et al., 2020; Sari & Arif, 2020; Sidiq & 'Uyun, 2019) (Figure 8). For instance, study conducted by Sari and Arif (2020) at Ikatan Mahasiswa Muhammadiyah, Jakarta discovered that the internalization effort to develop prophetic leadership among cadre was conducted in stages. The process starts with the planning of concept, followed by formulating strategies, implementing the strategies, and then evaluation of the progress and outcome. The aim of the internalization effort was to develop leadership behaviour based on Islamic vision through prophetic values of *siddiq*, *amanah*, *fathonah*, and *tabligh*. Similarly, the internalization process in a boarding school in Indonesia was also conducted in stages. The organization focuses more on giving real examples rather than just theory in their effort to teach the prophetic values (Sidiq & 'Uyun, 2019).

Meanwhile, Dewantoro et al (2021) found that Muhammadiyah primary and secondary school in Indonesia integrate prophetic leadership values into spiritual, academic, character, social, entrepreneur, and environmental activities that are conducted in the organization. On the other hand, Hamid and Juliansyahzen (2017) discovered that three basic principles of prophetic leadership (humanization, liberation, and transcendence) are internalized in the leadership patterns applied by the leaders in Islamic University of Indonesia. Accordingly, from this theme, it can be inferred that there are several strategies adopted in order to internalize prophetic leadership values in organizations. However, all the six studies focused on education sector, which suggests the dearth of research on prophetic leadership in other sectors such as in business organization. Thus, more future research is needed to fill in the gap.

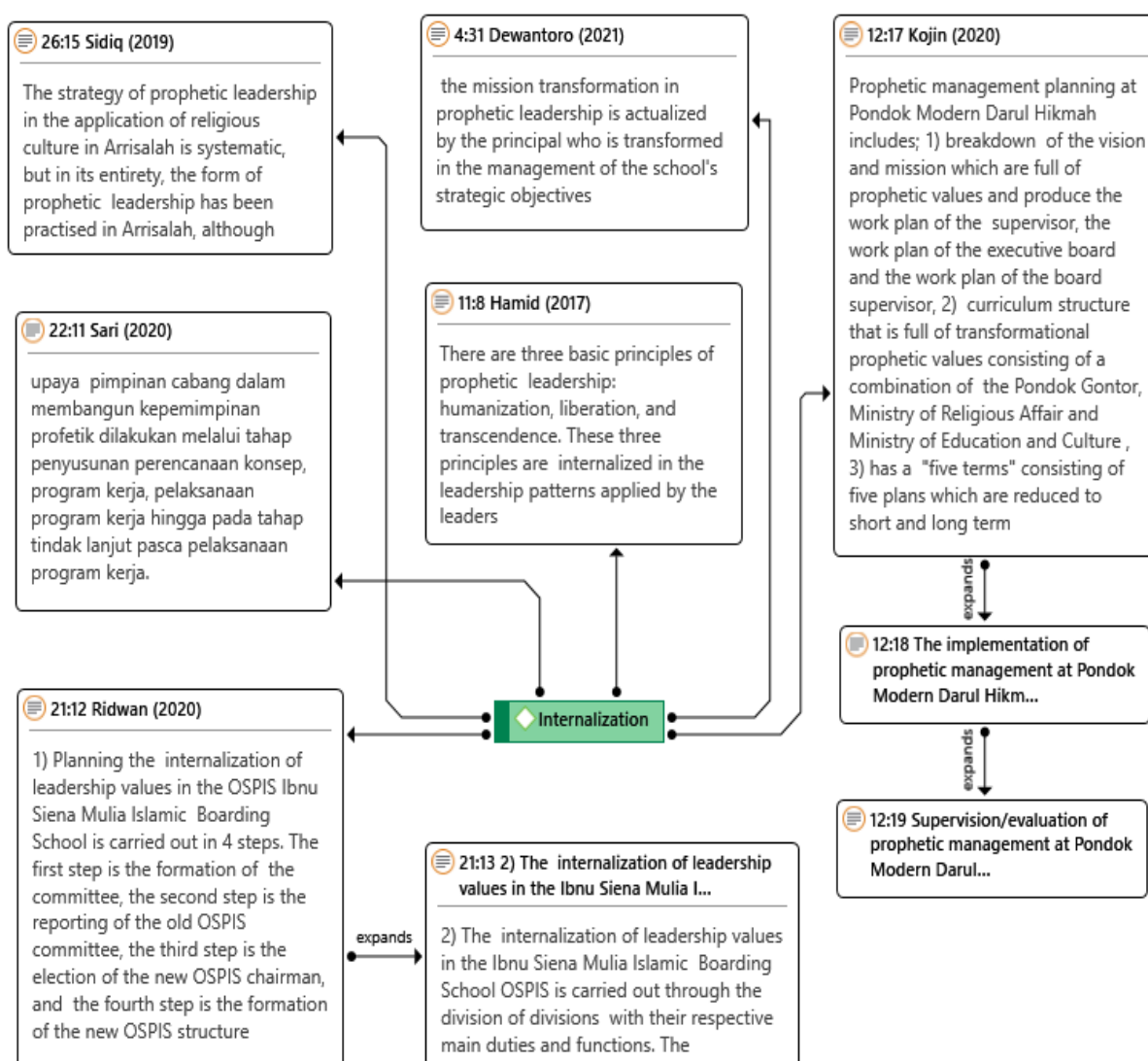


Figure 8. Network view on the internalization theme

*Supporting or inhibiting factor*

Supporting or inhibiting factor was among the popular theme discussed by researchers of prophetic leadership. Several supporting factors in implementation or internalization of prophetic leadership were presented such as conducive environment, sense of togetherness, high commitment (Maulana et al., 2019), and integrity of the leader (Sidiq & 'Uyun, 2019).

While the inhibiting factors underlined were human limitations and imperfections (Maulana et al., 2019; Sidiq & 'Uyun, 2019), and statutory regulations which somewhat limit the practise of prophetic leadership (Setiyaka et al., 2021). In addition, lack of awareness among employees was also pointed as a factor which hinder implementation of strategies with regards to the development of prophetic leadership values in organization (Setiawan & Aziz, 2020). To curb this situation, Setiawan and Aminudin Aziz (2020) posited the need to enhance competency among employees as well and increase of assertiveness by the leaders (Figure 9). A point to be inferred from this finding is that there is a great need for more research on prophetic leadership in order to create awareness on its importance and to facilitate its implementation.

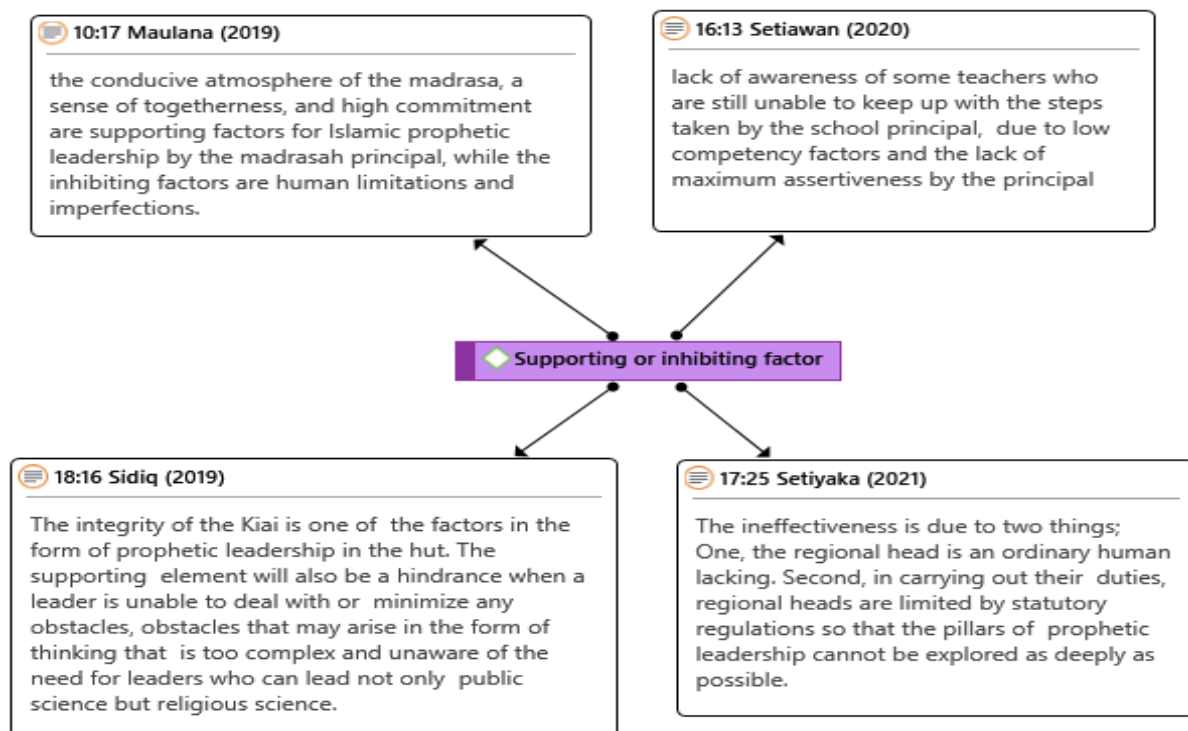


Figure 9. Network view on the supporting or inhibiting factor theme

### Model

Model is the next theme under the pattern of prophetic leadership publications in Islamic organizations. There were three studies which cover this theme (Marwiyah et al., 2017; Nik Maheran & Shahra, 2013; Zainuri et al., 2021) (Figure 10). For instance, Marwiyah et al. (2017) in their study proposed the need to combine the prophetic leadership values of *siddiq*, *amanah*, *fathonah*, and *tabligh* with extrinsic motivation based on cultural and ethical values. This is posited based on their findings that such combination would become an alternative to prevent ethical crisis such as corruption. Meanwhile, Zainuri et al (2021) discovered that the combination of prophetic leadership with organizational commitment and motivation give significant influence on employees' performance. On the other hand, Nik Maheran and Shahra (2013) tested prophetic leadership model in financial decision making and found that prophetic leadership values enhance the quality of financial decision making. Accordingly, as noted from the findings of the impact theme (Figure 6), there are various benefits that can be attained by practising prophetic leadership in organization. Hence, more publications that

explore the integration of prophetic leadership values with other aspects are needed so as to enhance the awareness of its benefits.

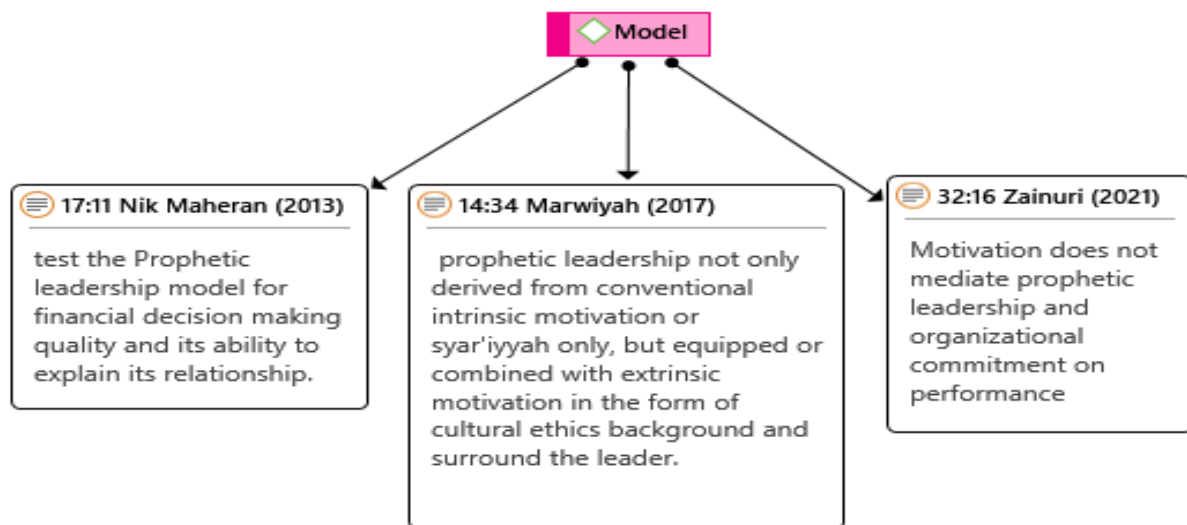


Figure 10. Network view on the model theme

### Role of leader

The role of leader in the perspective of prophetic leadership has also been discussed in two studies (Asmuni, 2020; Dewi, 2019a). Both studies explore on the application of prophetic leadership values *siddiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah* in four roles of leadership namely pathfinding, aligning, empowering, and modelling in their respective organizations. Findings of both studies on educational sector revealed that Islamic values have been applied to their role as leaders and are always maintained in the leadership process. Consequently, Dewi (2019a) asserted that such integration greatly helps in increasing the quality of success in Islamic organizations (Figure 11).

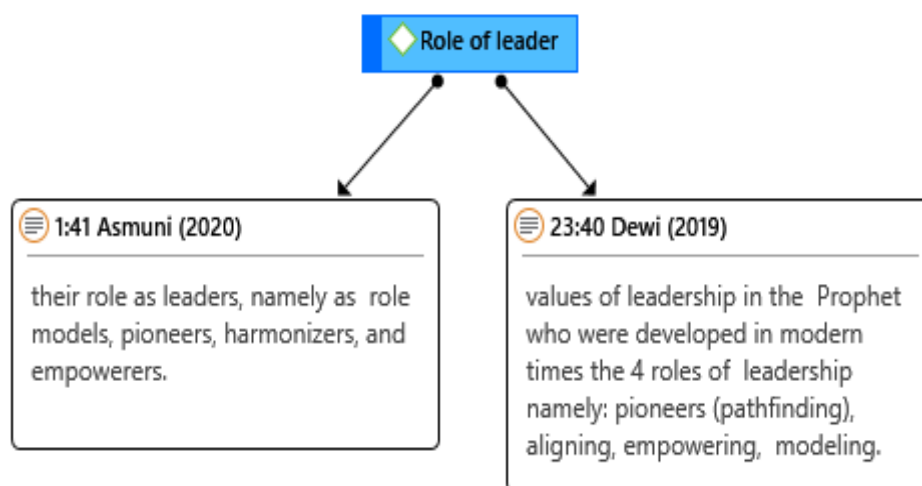


Figure 11. Network view on the role of leader theme

### Conclusion

This study has attempted to analyse the existing literatures on prophetic leadership. The findings from the code-to-document analysis in Atlas.ti8 indicated six research themes that are of most frequency in prophetic leadership publications namely, impact, application,

internalization, supporting or inhibiting factor, model, and role of leader. This study has contributed towards analysing the patterns of prophetic leadership publication by extensively identifying the thematic codes within prophetic leadership publications from the year 2010 till 2021. Thus, it offers understanding and knowledge that will benefit the future research direction. Additionally, it promotes the need to practice and internalize prophetic leadership values in organizations so as to attain success through quality leadership and to get blessing from Allah SWT.

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