

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**THE INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE OF  
CULTURE-CENTRED WEBSITE:  
CASE OF ISLAMIC GENRE WEBSITE**

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
**Doctor of Philosophy**

**Faculty of Computer Science and Mathematics**

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## Candidate's Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of University Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledge as references work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any other degree or qualification.

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## ABSTRACT

Website Information Architecture (IA) is an emerging discipline which focuses on the principles of design and architecture in the digital landscape. Many design principles and evaluation criteria for the development of websites IA, generally lack theoretical background and empirical justifications. IA is also considered as one area that has been mostly neglected and is still in great need of cultural investigation of the website design. The problem also lies when IA is highly disregarded in the cultural specific website, i.e., Islamic genre website. To overcome these limitations, the thesis makes modest theoretical and empirical contributions to the website IA phenomenon. It provides, (1) a formal treatment of website IA through the theoretical consideration from the architectural and cultural domains, and (2) fragment of empirical support for the formed theoretical framework. The main objective of this research is to present a theoretical framework of the website IA alongside the architectural and cultural perspectives. The framework of website IA was inspired by the fundamental ideas of the Vitruvius Theory, taken from the architectural understanding. Since the web is not a culturally neutral medium, the cultural dimensions are delineated within the formed framework of website IA, with the incorporation of the cultural dimensions from the cultural theorists of Hofstede, Hall and Trompenaars. Subsequently, the thesis provides fragments of empirical support for the formed theoretical framework by conducting empirical investigations, using the Islamic culture as the case study. The findings include: (1) goodness-fit-structure of the Web Architectural-Inducing Model (WA-IM) derived from the theoretical basis for the website IA, (2) empirical support for the linkage between culture and website IA, (3) empirical justification for the formed Islamic culture framework through the lens of cultural dimensions with religious interpretations, and (4) usability testing of the Islamic genre website IA prototype created, as partial application support for the formed theoretical framework of website IA. The thesis provides a bridge between research and practice due to the multi-disciplinary approaches ranging from theoretical development, empirical investigation, prototype development and usability testing. These approaches are necessary as they will provide a guidance for a better understanding of the website IA.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	ii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	iii
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	iv
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	xi
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	xiii
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1 Introduction to the Topic	1
1.2 Problem Statements	2
1.3 Research Goals	4
1.4 Research Questions	6
1.5 Research Objectives	7
1.6 Research Approach	8
1.7 Scope and Limitations	13
1.8 Research Contributions	13
<i>1.8.1 Theoretical Contribution</i>	14
<i>1.8.2 Empirical Contribution</i>	15
1.9 Outline of the Thesis	16
1.10 Publications Relating to the Thesis	23
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	
2.1 Introduction	25
2.2 IA Phenomenon	26
2.3 IA and Interaction Design	27
2.4 Architectural Influences on the Web	29
<i>2.4.1 Place</i>	30