



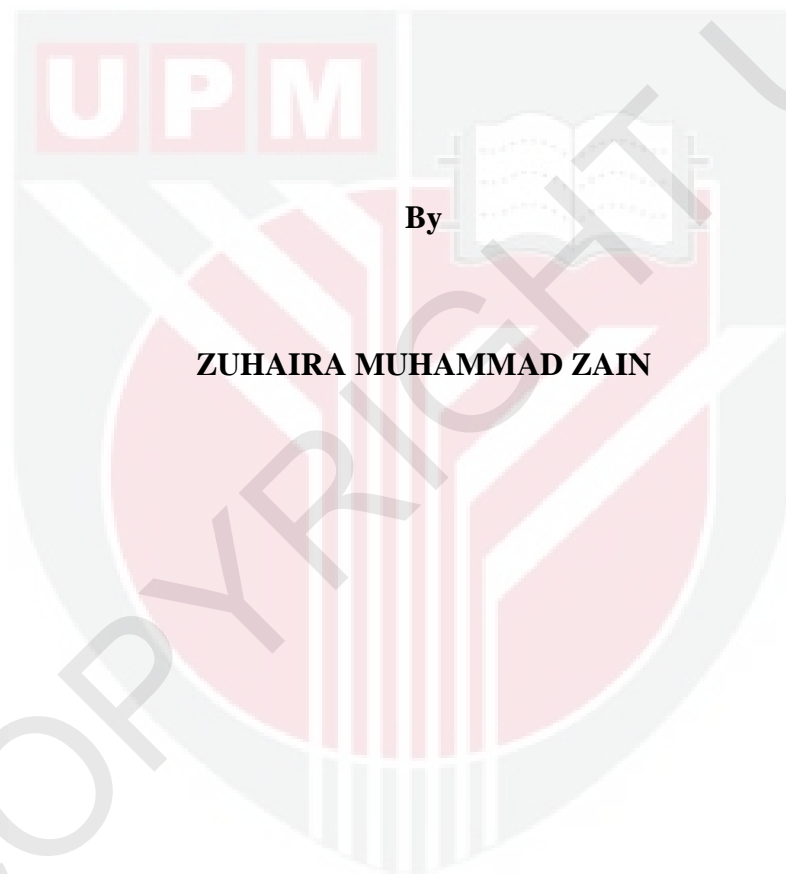
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

A MODEL FOR ASSESSING PERSONAL BLOG QUALITY

ZUHAIRA MUHAMMAD ZAIN

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A MODEL FOR ASSESSING PERSONAL BLOG QUALITY



By

ZUHAIRA MUHAMMAD ZAIN

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Philosophy**

November 2012

I dedicate this thesis, especially to:

my loving Husband,

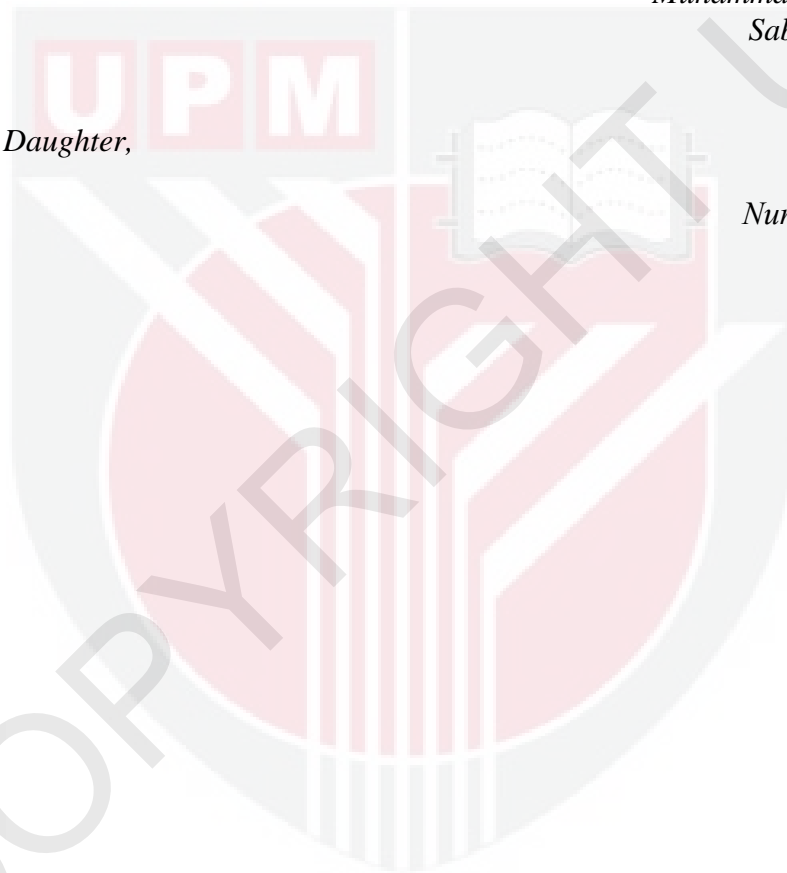
Anuar Amirrudin

my wonderful Parents,

*Muhammad Zain Said &
Sabariah Yaacob*

my lovely Daughter,

Nur Asma' Anuar



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

A MODEL FOR ASSESSING PERSONAL BLOG QUALITY

By

ZUHAIRA MUHAMMAD ZAIN

November 2012

Chairman: Professor Abdul Azim Abd. Ghani, PhD

Faculty: Computer Science and Information Technology

Technological breakthroughs have contributed to the increasing growth, as witnessed in the significant growth of the blogosphere. Blogs may serve to provide information to accomplish important tasks or to keep readers informed on latest developments. However, the blogosphere has been crippled by its disorganized and uncontrolled growth, which affects the accuracy, context, representation, and accessibility of the medium. This will contribute to the problem of having poor quality blogs in the blogosphere given blog- . Consequently, blog has become a medium to distribute rumours and if the accusations involve the integrity of systems, institutions, and personalities, thus jeopardizing national security, it could lead to countrywide chaos. Various developmental domains, such as software engineering, website engineering, and information systems, have provided acceptable models to assess their product quality. However, some criteria of these models are irrelevant and inappropriate for assessing blog quality. In the blogosphere, researchers and bloggers have proposed guidelines, checklists, rules, and tips to create good quality blogs. Nevertheless, these criteria are only pertinent from the perspective of the blogger, not the readers. Thus, there is no

evidence to show that the criteria are acceptable by the blog-readers. Many studies have been conducted to determine blog popularity, and credibility, but none of these focuses on blog quality. The aim of this research is to develop such a model to assess blog quality. First, the model was constructed by determining a set of criteria based on review of relevant literature and blogs. The acceptability of these criteria was subsequently measured through survey questionnaires sent to a sample of blog readers. A case study was conducted among the Personal Diary blog readers, the most popular blog category in Personal blog type, to validate the proposed model. The results show that the proposed model, comprising 49 criteria grouped into 11 families of features relevant to blog quality, was accepted and validated as a tool to assess blog quality. Second, case studies were conducted across five different Personal blog categories to analyse the importance of quality criteria. Our findings suggest that: (i) the importance of quality criteria or families of quality criteria depends on the respective blog category; (ii) certain quality criteria or families of quality criteria are more important for one blog category but less important for others; and (iii) some quality criteria or families of quality criteria are equally important for some blog categories but not for others. Third, a prototype of the Blog Quality Assessment Tool (BQAT) was successfully developed. Subsequently, a technology acceptance test using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was conducted to investigate whether the prototype had been accepted by the blog readers. This study explored the impact of blog read perceptions pertaining to ease of use, usefulness, attitude towards and intention to use the system to their liking. The findings indicate that the BQAT is an easy, effective, and useful method to help blog readers make a high quality assessment. This puts them in a positive frame of mind towards using the tool. Most importantly, blog readers suggest that bloggers should have the intention to participate in the blog quality assessment project. Hence, this research shows that the model can be used as a guide for blog readers to determine the quality of blogs visited. The model

This research not only implies that different blog categories should be designed using distinct quality criteria, in

line with their relative importance to the respective category, but also recommends that blog categories should be assessed using different sets of quality criteria in accordance with their relative importance. Additionally, this research also provides a valid prototype of the BQAT that assists readers to assess blog quality. The prototype can also be used to manage and blogosphere.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

MODEL UNTUK MENILAI KUALITI BLOG PERIBADI

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Kemajuan teknologi telah menyumbang terhadap pertumbuhan Internet yang berterusan seperti yang disaksikan dalam pertumbuhan komuniti blog yang signifikan. Blog sedia berkhidmat untuk menyediakan informasi untuk melaksanakan tugas penting atau untuk memastikan pembaca sentiasa mendapat perkembangan terkini. Walau bagaimanapun, komuniti blog telah dicemari oleh pertumbuhan yang tidak teratur dan tidak terkawal, yang menjejaskan ketepatan, konteks, persembahan dan pengaksesan medium tersebut. Ini akan menyumbang kepada masalah blog yang kurang berkualiti dalam komuniti blog dan pembaca blog diberikan akses yang mudah. Oleh itu, blog telah menjadi satu medium untuk menyebarkan khabar angin dan jika tuduhan melibatkan integriti sistem, institusi, dan personaliti, sekali gus menjejaskan keselamatan negara, ia boleh membawa kepada huru-hara di seluruh negara. Pelbagai domain pembangunan, seperti kejuruteraan perisian, kejuruteraan laman web, dan sistem maklumat, telah menyediakan model yang boleh diterima untuk menilai kualiti produk mereka. Walau bagaimanapun, sesetengah kriteria model tersebut tidak relevan dan tidak sesuai untuk menilai kualiti blog. Dalam komuniti blog, penyelidik dan penulis blog telah mencadangkan garis panduan, senarai semak, peraturan, dan tips

untuk menghasilkan blog yang berkualiti. Walau bagaimanapun, kriteria tersebut hanyalah dari perspektif penulis blog, bukan pembaca. Oleh itu, tidak ada bukti untuk menunjukkan bahawa kriteria tersebut diterima oleh pembaca blog. Banyak kajian telah dijalankan untuk menentukan populariti dan kredibiliti blog, tetapi tidak memfokus kepada kualiti blog. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk membangunkan sebuah model untuk menilai kualiti blog. Pertama, model ini telah dibina dengan menentukan set kriteria berdasarkan liputan literatur dan blog yang berkaitan. Penerimaan kriteria-kriteria ini kemudiannya diukur dengan menggunakan soalan kaji-selidik yang dihantar kepada sampel pembaca blog. Sebuah kajian kes telah dijalankan untuk mengesahkan model yang dicadangkan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa model yang dicadangkan yang terdiri daripada 49 kriteria yang telah dikumpulkan ke dalam 11 faktor yang relevan dengan kualiti blog telah diterima dan disahkan sebagai alat untuk menilai kualiti blog. Kedua, kajian kes telah dijalankan terhadap lima kategori blog yang berbeza untuk menganalisa kriteria kualiti yang penting. Penemuan kajian kami mencadangkan bahawa: (i) kepentingan kriteria atau faktor kualiti blog bergantung kepada kategori blog masing-masing; (ii) sesetengah kriteria atau faktor kualiti blog yang lebih penting untuk sesetengah kategori blog tetapi kurang penting untuk kategori blog yang lain; dan (iii) terdapat kriteria atau faktor kualiti blog yang mempunyai kepentingan yang sama untuk sesetengah kategori blog tetapi tidak untuk kategori blog yang lain. Ketiga, sebuah prototaip “Blog Quality Assessment Tool” telah berjaya dibangunkan. Selepas itu, sebuah ujian penerimaan berasaskan teknologi yang menggunakan “Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)” telah dijalankan untuk mengkaji sama ada prototaip ini boleh diterima pakai oleh pembaca blog. Kajian ini telah meneroka kesan persepsi pembaca blog yang berkaitan dengan kemudahan penggunaan, kegunaan, ke arah sikap dan hasrat untuk menggunakan sistem ini sesuai dengan kehendak mereka. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa BQAT senang, efektif dan berguna dalam membantu mereka menghasilkan penilaian yang berkualiti tinggi. Ini meletakkan mereka dalam kerangka minda yang positif untuk menggunakan sistem tersebut. Yang menjadi keutamaannya, pembaca blog telah

menyarankan bahawa penulis blog harus mempunyai hasrat untuk menyertai projek penilaian kualiti blog ini. Oleh itu, kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa model ini boleh digunakan sebagai panduan kepada pembaca blog untuk menentukan kualiti blog yang dilawati. Model ini juga boleh digunakan oleh penulis blog untuk menggalakkan kepuasan hati pembaca blog. Kajian ini bukan sahaja menunjukkan bahawa kategori blog yang berbeza sepatutnya direkabentuk dengan menggunakan kriteria kualiti yang berbeza, selaras dengan kepentingan relatif mereka terhadap kategori masing-masing, tetapi juga mencadangkan bahawa kategori blog perlu dinilai menggunakan set kriteria kualiti yang berbeza mengikut kepentingan relatif mereka. Selain itu, kajian ini juga menyediakan sebuah prototaip yang sah, BQAT yang membantu pembaca untuk menilai kualiti blog. Prototaip tersebut juga boleh digunakan untuk mengurus dan mengawal perkembangan blog agar hanya blog yang berkualiti tinggi sahaja yang akan terus berada di dalam komuniti blog.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 22 November 2012 to conduct the final examination of Zuhaira Muhammad Zain on her thesis entitled "A Model for Assessing Personal Blog Quality" in accordance with the Universities and University College Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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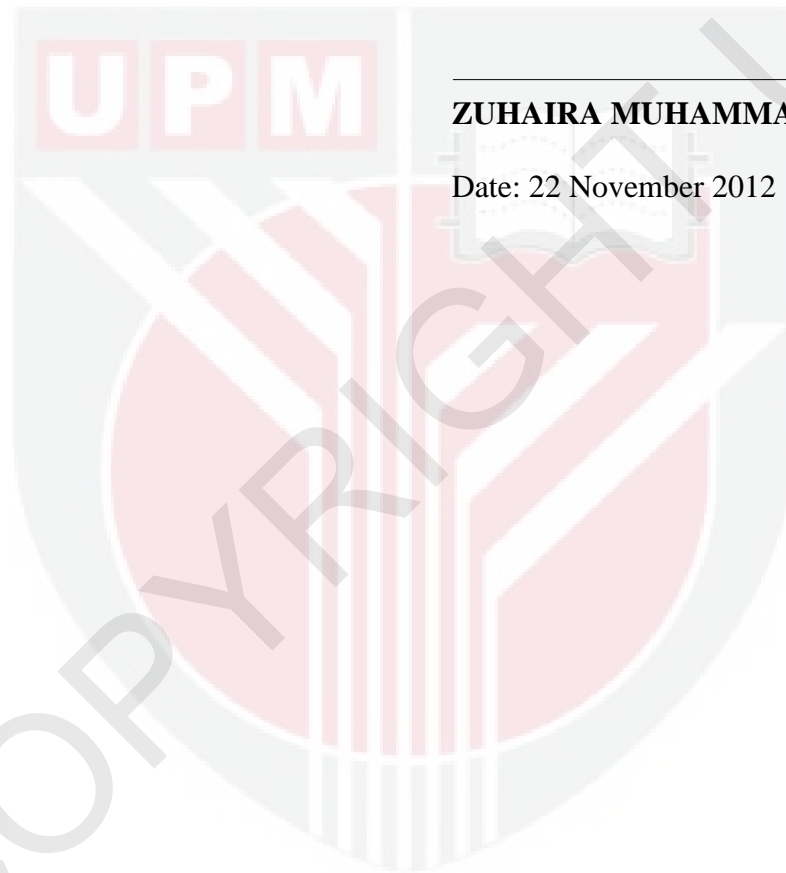
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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously and is not concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or other institutions.



ZUHAIRA MUHAMMAD ZAIN

Date: 22 November 2012

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