

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN: BEYOND USABILITY AND AESTHETIC STUDIES FOR PRAYER CHAIR

**Musdi Shanat**

*Universiti Malaysia Sarawak*

**Mohammad Jaidi Kumalah**

*Universiti Malaysia Sarawak*

Corresponding Author  
[smusdi@unimas.my](mailto:smusdi@unimas.my)

User-usability effect and aesthetic recognizes to fortify value in product creation in assisting the product to be more valuable. The contribution of usability and aesthetic factors enable to increase the potency of the product to be utilized for the target market segment of individual preferences. This paper focuses on the design aspect concerning the aesthetic-usability effect. An appropriate technique of designing the product, which compromises by many types of users in retaining the functionality, size, proportion, space for approach, reach manipulation, is discussed. Performing a prayer using a chair is a critical necessity for those who are no longer able to stand for a longer period of time. Little attention is given to these issues is the main caused of neglected targets for their comfort in the practices of prayed. The researchers agreed that the pleasant appearance of the products able to contribute to positive aesthetic-usability feeling and serve affordance quality with end-users, comparable to less aesthetic outlooks.

**Keywords:** aesthetic, usability effect, perceptions, universal design, prayer chair

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Research and development of prayer chair products is considered a marginalised activity. Existing chair products are not intentionally designed for Muslim prayers with disability and the form of the chairs may disturb concentration the other congregation during the prayer due to the size and bulky shape. Therefore, the researchers apply a Universal Design approaches in designing a prayer chair that is versatile and practical for all classes of users. This research briefly discusses and defines aesthetic and usability effect in the context of universal design approach. In general, aesthetic carries a vital role in the way design is used. A common parallel with the intended function and attractiveness of the design can stimulate a positive relationship between end-users and products (Lidwell, Holden, & Butler, 2003). In this study, the researchers were developing a prayer chair (Figure 1), which focuses on the functional-aesthetics. This product is considered as the functional-aesthetic product because of unique and affordance design that enable to stimulate the consumer's senses in immersive experience and to a dynamic effect (Seymore, 2010).

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1. *Design considerations for prayer chair*

The Muslim prayer or Solat is a ritual worship, consisting of prescribed recitations (in Arabic) along with specified bodily positions such as standing, bowing, prostrating, and sitting. All Muslims obligatorily must perform five times prayers every day. If someone is unable to perform Solat standing, he should perform it sitting. If he is unable to perform it sitting, he should perform it lying on his back." Allah SWT has mentioned about ability in performing Solat in Surah An-Nisa verse 4:103.

"Whoever has some excuse due to illness and cannot stand during the obligatory Prayer is allowed to pray sitting. If he cannot pray in a sitting posture, he may pray while on his side by making gestures. In such a case, his gestures for Sujud (prostration) should be lower than those for his Ruku` (bowing). This principle is based on Allah's words: (And celebrate Allah's praises, standing, sitting, and lying on your sides)" [Surah An-Nisaa 4:103]

Owing to the aforementioned situation, a Muslim people have given some leeway in performing their prayer positions depending to physical abilities. Therefore, there is a need to design a product or system to assist them. According to Ahuvia (2005), people can intervene over what the system is not capable by suggesting some action and process depending on individual proficiency and experience.