

MULTI-CRITERIA DECISION-MAKING PROTOTYPE FOR THE 4TH  
CONSTRUCTION REVOLUTION IMPLEMENTATION READINESS USING  
INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL PERSPECTIVE

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## DEDICATION

To my beloved parents:

My father and role model, Prof. Tahseen Mansour, who has supported me financially, emotionally, and spiritually through this journey.

Who instilled in me the notion that sky is the limit, and anything is possible with hard work and passion.

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## ABSTRACT

The fourth industrial revolution, so-called Industry 4.0 has transformed the decision-making process by increasing the use of information and digitisation technologies, which resulted in improving the performance and structuring the management process to the industry. Thus, in recent years, the implementation level of information and digitisation technologies in the construction industry, termed as ‘Construction 4.0 (CR4.0)’, has increased rapidly. However, the construction industry has been unable to translate its acquired knowledge into actionable, transformational and strategic goals towards CR4.0. CR4.0 has changed the nature of competitive resources by reshaping the structure and way construction firms work. Construction firms face various technological, human, and process-related challenges. The starting point for this research was based on exploring the potentials in reskilling and upskilling knowledge through the development of Intellectual Capital (IC) of the construction firms. As a result, based on the Resource-based View theory, CR4.0 implementation process has been approached as a knowledge-based innovation which occurred with the development of three IC capitals: Human Capital (HC), Relationship Capital (RC) and Structure Capital (SC). Hence, this research aims to develop a Multi-Criteria Decision-Making (MCDM) prototype, used to support decision-making in CR4.0 readiness, named as the ‘Construction Firm's Industry 4.0 Readiness MCDM (ConFIRM)’. The first objective is to identify the critical criteria of IC that may affect the CR4.0 implementation readiness. The process involved Systematic Literature review and semi-structured interviews. The second objective is to investigate the significant level of IC affecting CR4.0 implementation readiness through Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) technique. The third objective is to derive the weightage of criteria and sub-criteria of ConFIRM through Decision-Making Trial and Evaluation Laboratory (DEMATEL) and Analytic Network Process (ANP). The fourth objective is to develop a prototype called as ConFIRM that comprising of 3 main criteria, 16 sub-criteria and 92 super sub-criteria according to their significance weightage in achieving CR4.0 implementation readiness. The MCDM results indicated HC (37%) to be the most critical CR4.0 main criteria, followed by SC (34%), and RC (29%) respectively. The HC represented the cumulative tacit knowledge within the organisation, and it would be the main generator of intangibles. For the sub-criteria level, the results indicated that “Management Capital (12%)” has been considered the most critical CR4.0 sub-criteria. The second most critical sub-criteria would be the “Experience Capital (10%)”, followed by “Process Capital (8%)”. On the other hand, the “Sustainable Capital (2%)” was the least critical sub-criteria. Then, the weightages were formulated into automated MCDM prototype, where the scores were calculated using the Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution (TOPSIS), indicating the CR4.0 implementation readiness. As for the fourth objective, ConFIRM was adopted in real case studies and evaluated based on the judgement of five experts to determine its applicability and validity in evaluating CR4.0 readiness of contracting firms in Malaysia. In the case studies, the experts recognised the performance and effectiveness of ConFIRM as the novel method for CR4.0 readiness evaluation. ConFIRM would be able to add value to the development of CR4.0 strategies by identifying the corrective/preventive actions needed, based on the readiness assessment, before the start of the implementation process.

## ABSTRAK

Revolusi perindustrian ke-4, yang dipanggil Industri 4.0, mengubah proses membuat keputusan melalui peningkatan penggunaan teknologi maklumat dan pendigitalan yang mengakibatkan meningkatkan prestasi dan menyusun semula proses pengurusan kepada industri. Dengan demikian, sejak kebelakangan ini, tahap pelaksanaan teknologi maklumat dan pendigitalan dalam industri pembinaan, yang disebut sebagai 'Pembinaan 4.0 (CR4.0)', sebahagian besar peningkatan. Walau bagaimanapun, industri pembinaan tidak dapat menterjemahkan pengetahuan yang diperolehi kepada strategi transformasi yang dapat dilaksanakan ke arah CR4.0. CR4.0 telah mengubah sifat sumber daya saing dengan membentuk semula struktur dan cara kerja firma pembinaan. Firma pembinaan menghadapi pelbagai cabaran berkaitan teknologi, manusia dan proses. Titik permulaan kajian ini didasarkan ke penerokaan potensi dalam kemahiran semula dan meningkatkan pengetahuan melalui pengembangan Modal Intelektual (IC) firma pembinaan. Akibatnya, berdasarkan teori Pandangan Berasaskan Sumber, proses pelaksanaan CR4.0 dikenali sebagai inovasi berasaskan pengetahuan yang terjadi dengan pengembangan tiga modal IC: Modal Manusia (HC), Modal Hubungan (RC) dan Modal Struktur (SC). Justeru, penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk membangunkan prototaip Multi-Criteria Decision-Making (MCDM), yang digunakan untuk mendukung pengambilan keputusan dalam strategi CR4.0, yang dinamakan sebagai 'Construction Firm's Industry 4.0 Readiness MCDM (ConFIRM)'. Objektif pertama adalah untuk mengenal pasti elemen IC kritikal yang boleh mempengaruhi kesediaan pelaksanaan CR4.0. Proses yang terlibat kajian literatur bersistematik dan temu bual separa berstruktur. Objektif kedua adalah untuk menyiasat tahap kepentingan IC yang mempengaruhi pelaksanaan CR4.0 melalui teknik Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP). Objektif ketiga adalah untuk mendapatkan wajaran kriteria dan sub-kriteria ConFIRM melalui Decision-Making Trial and Evaluation Laboratory (DEMATEL) dan Analytic Network Process (ANP). Objektif keempat adalah untuk membangunkan prototaip yang dipanggil ConFIRM yang terdiri daripada 3 kriteria utama, 16 sub-kriteria dan 92 super sub-kriteria mengikut wajaran kepentingannya dalam mencapai kesediaan pelaksanaan CR4.0. Keputusan MCDM menunjukkan HC (37%) sebagai kriteria utama CR4.0 yang paling kritikal, diikuti oleh SC (34%), dan RC (29%). HC mewakili kumulatif pengetahuan tersirat dalam organisasi dan ia adalah penjana utama yang tidak ketara. Untuk tahap sub-kriteria, keputusan menunjukkan bahawa "Modal Pengurusan (12%)" dianggap sebagai sub-kriteria CR4.0 yang paling kritikal. Sub-kriteria CR4.0 yang kedua paling kritikal adalah "Modal Pengalaman (10%)", diikuti oleh "Modal Proses (8%)". Sebaliknya, "Modal Lestari (2%)" adalah Sub-kriteria paling tidak kritikal. Kemudian, pemberat dirumuskan menjadi prototaip MCDM automatik, di mana skor - dikira menggunakan Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution (TOPSIS) - menunjukkan kesediaan strategik CR4.0. Dalam objektif keempat, ConFIRM dilaksanakan dalam kajian kes sebenar dan dinilai melalui penilaian lima pakar untuk menentukan kebolehlaksanaan dan kesahihannya dalam menilai kesediaan CR4.0 oleh syarikat kontraktor di Malaysia. Dalam kajian kes, para pakar mengiktiraf prestasi dan keberkesanan ConFIRM sebagai kaedah baru untuk penilaian CR4.0. ConFIRM menambah nilai untuk pengembangan strategi CR4.0 dengan menunjukkan di mana tindakan pembetulan/ pencegahan diperlukan, berdasarkan penilaian, sebelum memulakan pelaksanaannya.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
	<b>DECLARATION</b>	<b>iii</b>
	<b>DEDICATION</b>	<b>iv</b>
	<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	<b>v</b>
	<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>vi</b>
	<b>ABSTRAK</b>	<b>vii</b>
	<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>viii</b>
	<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>xv</b>
	<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>xviii</b>
	<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>xxii</b>
	<b>LIST OF SYMBOLS</b>	<b>xxiv</b>
	<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b>	<b>xxv</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Background of the Research	1
1.2	Problem Statement	5
1.3	Research Gap	8
1.4	Aim and Objectives of the Research	11
1.5	Scope of the Research	12
1.6	Significance of the Research	13
1.7	Research Framework of Thesis	14
1.8	Structure of the Research	16
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	<b>LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>19</b>
2.1	Introduction	19
2.2	The Fourth Revolution	19
2.2.1	The Construction Revolution	20
2.2.2	Construction 4.0 Technologies	23
2.2.3	Malaysia Towards Construction 4.0	27

2.2.4	Context of Construction 4.0	32
2.3	CR4.0 Implementation Readiness Evaluation	34
2.3.1	Industry 4.0 Maturity Models	35
2.3.2	Strategic Readiness	39
2.3.3	Industry 4.0 Value Creation	41
2.4	IC Critical Criteria in Construction 4.0	42
2.4.1	Data Acquisition	42
2.4.2	Scientometric Analysis	44
2.4.2.1	Scientometric Results	44
2.4.3	Quantitative Analysis	47
2.4.3.1	Presentation of IC Meta-Model.	50
2.5	Theoretical Foundations	50
2.5.1	Knowledge-Based Innovation	53
2.5.1.1	Human Capital (HC)	55
2.5.1.2	Structural Capital (SC)	55
2.5.1.3	Relational Capital (RC)	55
2.5.2	Intellectual Capital and Construction 4.0	56
2.5.3	Human Capital and Construction 4.0	57
2.5.4	Structural Capital and Construction 4.0	58
2.5.5	Relational Capital and Construction 4.0	59
2.6	Conceptual Framework	60
2.6.1	1 <sup>st</sup> Level: CR4.0 Implementation.	60
2.6.2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Level: CR4.0 Main Criteria	60
2.6.3	3 <sup>rd</sup> Level: CR4.0 Sub-Criteria	61
2.6.4	4 <sup>th</sup> Level: CR4.0 Super Sub-Criteria	61
2.7	Decision-Making Techniques	62
2.7.1	Decision Making on CR4.0	63
2.7.2	Multi-Criteria Decision-Making	66
2.7.3	Selection of Appropriate MCDM	68
2.7.3.1	DEMATEL Technique	71
2.7.3.2	AHP and ANP Techniques	73
2.7.3.3	Hybrid MCDM Model	75

	2.7.3.4	TOPSIS Technique	76
2.8		Summary of the Chapter	77
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>		<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>79</b>
3.1		Introduction	79
3.2		Research Design	80
	3.2.1	Research Design Details	82
	3.2.2	Research Sample and Population	83
		3.2.2.1 Subject Matter Experts	85
		3.2.2.2 Experts' Selection and Requirements	85
3.3		Phase 1: Variables Development	87
	3.3.1	Research Instrument	87
		3.3.1.1 Desktop Research Review	87
		3.3.1.2 Preliminary Study	88
		3.3.1.3 Semi-structured Interviews	89
	3.3.2	Sample Size	90
	3.3.3	Data Collection	91
	3.3.4	Data Analysis Techniques	91
		3.3.4.1 Preliminary Study Analysis	92
		3.3.4.2 Frequency Analysis	92
		3.3.4.3 Average Index Analysis	93
3.4		Phase 2: Variables Analysis	94
	3.4.1	Research Instrument	94
		3.4.1.1 Pair-Wiser Technique	94
		3.4.1.2 Pairwise Comparison	97
	3.4.2	Sample Size	98
	3.4.3	Data Collection	100
	3.4.4	Data Analysis Techniques	101
		3.4.4.1 Reliability Test	102
		3.4.4.2 Descriptive Analysis	103
		3.4.4.3 AHP Procedure	103



	3.4.4.4	DEMATEL Procedure	104
	3.4.4.5	ANP Procedure	105
	3.4.4.6	Inconsistency Analysis	106
	3.4.4.7	Disagreement Analysis	108
3.5		Phase 3: DM Model Development	108
	3.5.1	Research Instrument	109
		3.5.1.1 Desirability Curves	109
		3.5.1.2 Rapid Prototyping	111
	3.5.2	Data Collection and Sampling	113
		3.5.2.1 Desirability Curves Survey	113
		3.5.2.2 Case Study	114
	3.5.3	Data Analysis Techniques	117
		3.5.3.1 Weighted Sum Method	117
		3.5.3.2 The TOPSIS Procedures	118
		3.5.3.3 Direct Scoring Analysis	120
3.6		Summary of the Chapter	120
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>		<b>DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS</b>	<b>121</b>
	4.1	Introduction	121
	4.2	Preliminary Study of CR4.0 in Malaysia	121
		4.2.1 Reliability and Normality	122
		4.2.2 Background of Respondents	123
		4.2.3 CR4.0 Implementation in Malaysia	124
		4.2.4 Benefits of CR4.0	125
		4.2.5 IC Management in Construction Firms	127
		4.2.6 Relationship Between IC and CR4.0	128
	4.3	Results and Discussions of Objective 1	129
		4.3.1 Demographic Data of the Respondents	129
		4.3.2 Research Tools Validation	130
		4.3.3 Variables Validation: Frequency Analysis	131
		4.3.3.1 Decision Level	131
		4.3.3.2 Human Capital Perspective	132

4.3.3.3	Structural Capital Perspective	134
4.3.3.4	Relational Capital Perspective	136
4.3.4	Validated Hierarchy Framework	138
4.4	Results and Discussions of Objective 2	141
4.4.1	Experts Panel Analysis	142
4.4.2	Frequency Analysis	143
4.4.2.1	Involvement in CR4.0	144
4.4.3	Reliability Analysis	145
4.4.4	AHP Analysis and Discussions	145
4.4.4.1	AHP Results for HC	147
4.4.4.2	AHP Results for SC	151
4.4.4.3	AHP Results for RC	153
4.4.5	Summary of the AHP results	155
4.5	Results and discussions of Objective 3	156
4.5.1	Building DM using SuperDecisions Software	157
4.5.2	Step 1: DEMATEL Analysis	158
4.5.2.1	DEMATEL Results to ANP Model	161
4.5.3	Step 2: ANP Analysis	162
4.5.3.1	Inconsistency and Disagreement Analysis	164
4.5.4	Step 3: Limit Super-matrix	166
4.5.5	DANP Results and Discussions	167
4.5.6	CR4.0 Implementation Readiness Framework	169
4.6	Summary of the Chapter	178
<b>CHAPTER 5</b>	<b>PROTOTYPE DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION</b>	<b>179</b>
5.1	Introduction	179
5.2	Desirability Curves Development	179
5.2.1	HC Desirability Curves	180
5.2.2	SC Desirability Curves	182
5.2.3	RC Desirability Curves	184
5.3	Development of ConFIRM Prototype	186

5.3.1	Framework of Computer-based ConFIRM	188
5.3.2	System Architecture of ConFIRM	189
5.3.3	The Architecture of ConFIRM	191
5.3.3.1	Knowledge Base	191
5.3.3.2	Decision-Making System	192
5.3.3.3	User Interface	192
5.3.4	Components of ConFIRM	192
5.3.5	ConFIRM User Manual	197
5.4	Implementation of ConFIRM	197
5.4.1	Case Study Data	199
5.4.2	Discussion of a Case Study Results	200
5.5	Validation of ConFIRM	204
5.6	Summary of the Chapter	205
<b>CHAPTER 6</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>207</b>
6.1	Introduction	207
6.2	Achievement of Objectives	207
6.2.1	Objective 1: To identify the critical criteria of IC that would affect the CR4.0 implementation readiness	208
6.2.2	Objective 2: To investigate the level of significance of IC that would affect the CR4.0 implementation readiness	208
6.2.3	Objective 3: To analyse the scoring and weightage factor for ConFIRM.	209
6.2.4	Objective 4: To develop the automated MCDM prototype.	210
6.3	Research Validity	211
6.3.1	Construct Validity	212
6.3.2	Content Validity	212
6.3.3	Criterion Validity	213
6.3.4	Generalisability Validity	213
6.4	Conclusions and Contributions	214
6.4.1	Theoretical Contribution	215

6.4.2	Practical Contribution	216
6.4.2.1	Contribution to Malaysia	217
6.5	Research Limitations	218
6.6	Future Research	219
<b>REFERENCES</b>		<b>221</b>
<b>LIST OF PUBLICATIONS</b>		<b>310</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>TABLE NO.</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Table 2.1	Clustering CR4.0 technologies	24
Table 2.2	CR4.0 clusters and technologies	33
Table 2.3	Existing IR4.0 maturity and readiness models	37
Table 2.4	Analysed models of IC in construction	48
Table 2.5	Comparison between various methodologies found in the literature	64
Table 2.6	Recent research utilising MCDM in the context of construction management	68
Table 2.7	Justification of using DEMATEL	71
Table 2.8	Recent research utilising DEMATEL in the context of construction management	73
Table 3.1	Research Design Table	81
Table 3.2	Description of Research Design Steps	82
Table 3.3	Criteria for choosing Subject Matter Expert	86
Table 3.4	Range and classification of AI for interviews	94
Table 3.5	Pair-Wiser principles	96
Table 3.6	The fundamental scale in AHP	97
Table 3.7	Defined Sample Sizes for AHP and ANP techniques in Past Research	99
Table 3.8	Defined Sample Sizes for DEMATEL technique in Past Research	99
Table 3.9	Range and Situation for Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	103
Table 3.10	Experience Capital levels of Metrics	109
Table 3.11	ConFIRM validation Aspects	116
Table 3.12	Range and classification for AI for validation	120
Table 4.1	Preliminary study Reliability test	122
Table 4.2	Preliminary study Normality test	123
Table 4.3	Summary of the respondents' demographic data	124

Table 4.4	Strategies in implementing CR4.0	125
Table 4.5	Benefits of CR4.0 implementation	126
Table 4.6	Pearson Correlation results	128
Table 4.7	Means for the validation of the Quantitative Questionnaire	131
Table 4.8	Experts Comments on SSCr related to Agility Capital	134
Table 4.9	Experts Comments on SSCr related to Innovation Capital	136
Table 4.10	Experts Comments on SSCr related to Customer Capital	138
Table 4.11	Selection criteria for experts' panel	142
Table 4.12	Demographic data of the online interviews Respondents	144
Table 4.13	Reliability results using Cronbach's Alpha for research instruments	145
Table 4.14	Pair-Wiser scoring for HAM	146
Table 4.15	Transformation of Pair-Wiser to pairwise comparison for HAM	147
Table 4.16	Local RWVs for HAM	147
Table 4.17	Pairwise Comparison Matrices and RWV for HC SSCr	148
Table 4.18	Pairwise Comparison Matrices and RWV for SC SSCr	151
Table 4.19	Pairwise Comparison Matrices and RWV for RC SSCr	153
Table 4.20	Summary of Objective 2 results.	156
Table 4.21	DEMATEL Average Matrix (A-Matrix)	158
Table 4.22	DEMATEL Normalised-average Matrix (N-Matrix)	159
Table 4.23	DEMATEL Total-relation Matrix (T-Matrix)	159
Table 4.24	DEMATEL Results of the (R+C) and (R-C)	159
Table 4.25	DEMATEL Dependency Matrix (D-Matrix)	161
Table 4.26	The Dispatched and Received Arrows for CR4IMP	161
Table 4.27	Average comparison matrices of local RWV of each SCr	163
Table 4.28	Inconsistency rate of each SCr level	164
Table 4.29	Final Weights of CR4.0 implementation readiness main criteria and sub-criteria analysed by SuperDecisions software	169

Table 4.30	Fourth level of the DM framework for CR4.0 implementation readiness	171
Table 5.1	Detailed Scores and Ranking of ConFIRM	187
Table 5.2	Basic Information about the selected case studies.	198
Table 5.3	Final Scores of ConFIRM for the case studies	199
Table 5.4	Validation results of ConFIRM prototype	204
Table 6.1	How the research addressed the Gaps	216

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>FIGURE NO.</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Figure 1.1	Theoretical links that guided this research	4
Figure 1.2	IR4.0 implementation surveys and reports	7
Figure 1.3	Research Gap	11
Figure 1.4	Research framework	16
Figure 2.1	Evolution of the Industrial and Construction Revolutions	20
Figure 2.2	Top ten disruptive technologies in construction	21
Figure 2.3	The application of CR4.0 in the Malaysian Construction Industry	23
Figure 2.4	Future digital technology research roadmap	25
Figure 2.5	Seven CR4.0 technology groups and their supporting technologies	26
Figure 2.6	Malaysia Construction 4.0 Strategic Plan	28
Figure 2.7	Application of Drones in Malaysian Projects	30
Figure 2.8	Summary of percentages of usage on CR4.0 application	31
Figure 2.9	Technology Clustering in Construction 4.0 Strategic Plan	32
Figure 2.10	Six Level of Lichtblau's Maturity Model	36
Figure 2.11	Blueprint for digit success by PwC	37
Figure 2.12	The Balanced Scorecard Strategy map	40
Figure 2.13	IR4.0 Value Creation in the Construction Industry	41
Figure 2.14	Description of the mixed methods SLR process	43
Figure 2.15	Description of SLR selected articles by publication year.	44
Figure 2.16	Visualisation of journal sources that published selected articles	45
Figure 2.17	Visualisation of author keywords from the selected sample	46
Figure 2.18	Radar Charts indicating the results of the quantitative analysis	47
Figure 2.19	IC in construction Meta-Model	50



Figure 2.20	RBV theory Conceptual Model	51
Figure 2.21	The Integrated KBV of the Firm	52
Figure 2.22	Knowledge-Based Innovation concept model	53
Figure 2.23	Theoretical Framework of CR4.0 implementation readiness	54
Figure 2.24	An integrated framework of IC for IR4.0	57
Figure 2.25	Main pillars of CR4.0	58
Figure 2.26	Conceptual framework for CR4.0 implementation readiness using IC perspective	62
Figure 2.27	Characteristics for DM model	66
Figure 2.28	Criteria to choose an appropriate MCDM Technique	69
Figure 2.29	Advantages of AHP/ANP over other MCDM techniques	70
Figure 2.30	Main benefits of utilising the DEMATEL approach	72
Figure 2.31	Difference Between Hierarchy and Network Models	74
Figure 2.32	Hybrid ANP-TOPSIS integration steps	76
Figure 3.1	Research Design Details	82
Figure 3.2	Summary of the data analyses steps for each questionnaire	102
Figure 3.3	Steps of AHP procedure	104
Figure 3.4	DEMATEL procedure	104
Figure 3.5	Steps of ANP procedure	106
Figure 3.6	Simple example to establish the concept of inconsistency	107
Figure 3.7	Various shapes of desirability curves	111
Figure 3.8	Prototype Development Process	112
Figure 3.9	ConFIRM Evaluation Process Flow Chart	115
Figure 3.10	TOPSIS technique procedures	118
Figure 4.1	Normality Q-Q plot results	122
Figure 4.2	Percentages for achieving measurable results from implementing CR4.0	126
Figure 4.3	IC management within the Malaysian construction sector	127
Figure 4.4	Demographic data of the semi-structured interviews respondents	129
Figure 4.5	Validation results of SSCr related to HC	133

Figure 4.6	Validation results of SSCr related to SC	135
Figure 4.7	Validation results of SSCr related to RC	137
Figure 4.8	Radar charts summarising the results of the semi-structured interviews	138
Figure 4.9	Validated CR4.0 implementation readiness Variables	139
Figure 4.10	Validated CR4.0 implementation readiness Variables with Codes for Variables Analysis	140
Figure 4.11	The levels of the CR4.0 implementation readiness framework	141
Figure 4.12	Respondents' involvement in CR4.0 implementation	145
Figure 4.13	Pie Chart of local RWV of HC SSCr	149
Figure 4.14	Pie Chart of local RWV of SC SSCr	152
Figure 4.15	Pie Chart of local RWV of RC SSCr	154
Figure 4.16	Components of the ANP framework displaying clusters and interactions	157
Figure 4.17	DEMATEL Cause-Effect Diagram	160
Figure 4.18	Demonstration of interactions among MCr in SuperDecisions software	162
Figure 4.19	Local RWV and inconsistency of SCr under HC being calculated in SuperDecisions software	162
Figure 4.20	F-test value for HC sub-criteria	165
Figure 4.21	F-test value for SC sub-criteria	165
Figure 4.22	F-test value for RC sub-criteria	165
Figure 4.23	Part of Limit super-matrix	167
Figure 4.24	Priorities and RWV of CR4.0 implementation readiness SCr	167
Figure 4.25	Second and Third level of the DM framework for CR4.0 implementation	170
Figure 4.26	Visual map of the CR4.0 implementation readiness DM framework	176
Figure 4.27	A map of CR4.0 Implementation readiness improvement area	177
Figure 5.1	Desirability curves for Construction Experience	180
Figure 5.2	Desirability curves for Productivity	181

Figure 5.3	Desirability curves for Training & Development	181
Figure 5.4	Desirability curves for Top Management Support.	182
Figure 5.5	Desirability curves for Operation Process	183
Figure 5.6	Desirability curves for Specialised Software	183
Figure 5.7	Desirability curves for Industry Image	184
Figure 5.8	Desirability curves for Clients' Trust & Respect	185
Figure 5.9	Desirability curves for Cross-Department Exchange	185
Figure 5.10	Framework of computer-based ConFIRM	189
Figure 5.11	System Architecture of ConFIRM	190
Figure 5.12	Architecture of ConFIRM	191
Figure 5.13	Components of ConFIRM prototype	193
Figure 5.14	The "Home" Window of ConFIRM	194
Figure 5.15	Sample of score calculations for Agility Capital	195
Figure 5.16	Sample of CR4.0 readiness score calculations for Total Score	195
Figure 5.17	Screenshot of the "Score" Window of ConFIRM	196
Figure 5.18	Sample of the "maturity" tab of ConFIRM	197
Figure 5.19	Final Scores of ConFIRM for the Case Study	201
Figure 5.20	Exported Charts from ConFIRM for the Case Study	202

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AHP	-	Analytical Hierarchy Process
ANP	-	Analytic Network Process
BIM	-	Building Information Modelling
CIDB	-	Construction Industry Development Board
ConFIRM	-	Construction Firm's Industry 4.0 MCDM
CPS	-	Cyber-Physical Systems
CR4.0	-	Construction 4.0
DANP	-	Hybrid DEMATEL-ANP
DEMATEL	-	Decision Making Trial and Evaluation Laboratory
DMF	-	Decision Making Factor
HC	-	Human Capital
IA	-	Intangible Assets
IC	-	Intellectual Capital
ICBV	-	Intellectual Capital-Based View
ICC	-	Interclass Correlation Coefficient
IoT	-	Internet of Things
IR4.0	-	Industry 4.0
IS	-	Information System
IT	-	Information Technology
KBI	-	Knowledge-Based Innovation
KBV	-	Knowledge-Based View
MCDM	-	Multi-Criteria Decision-Making
MCO	-	Movement Control Order
MCr	-	Main Criteria
MM	-	Maturity Model
MVF	-	Model Validation Form
NIS	-	Neagtive Ideal Solution
PC	-	Pairwise Comparison
PIS	-	Positive Ideal Solution
PS	-	Preliminary Study

PW	-	Pair-Wiser
RBV	-	Resource-Based View
RC	-	Relational Capital
RFID	-	Radio Frequency Identification
RWV	-	Relative Weightage Value
SC	-	Structural Capital
SCr	-	Sub-Criteria
SE	-	Self Evaluator
SME	-	Subject Matter Expert
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SSCr	-	Super Sub-Criteria
TOPSIS	-	Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution
UI	-	User Interface
UTM	-	Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
VC	-	Value Creation
WSM	-	Weighted Sum Method

## LIST OF SYMBOLS

%	-	Percentage
$N$	-	Total number of respondents
$M$	-	Mean
$\Sigma$	-	Sum
$A^+$	-	Positive Ideal Solution
$A^-$	-	Negative Ideal Solution
$S^+$	-	Separation form the Positive Solution
$S^-$	-	Separation from the Negative Solution
$C^*$	-	Closeness to Ideal solution
$w$	-	Weight

## LIST OF APPENDICES

<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Appendix A	Preliminary Study Questionnaire	243
Appendix B	Model Validation Form	248
Appendix C	PW Questionnaire	253
Appendix D	PC Questionnaire	259
Appendix E	Survey of Desirability Curves and Metrics	262
Appendix F	ConFIRM Evaluation Form	281
Appendix G	Invitation Letters	283
Appendix H	Desirability Curves	285
Appendix I	Online Interviews	295
Appendix J	Readiness Levels Validation	297
Appendix K	ConFIRM User Manual	299

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Research

The world has experienced three major industrial revolutions in its history and is currently undergoing its fourth revolution; in which every change has promoted optimal performance, output and benefits. The first revolution was the “Steam Revolution” at the end of the eighteenth century; the second revolution, the “Electric Revolution” at the beginning of the twentieth century; and the third revolution, the “Information Revolution” in the 1970s (Li and Yang, 2017). Currently, the fourth revolution is coming into view directed by cyber-physical systems (CPS), the internet of things (IoT), cloud computing, and mobile computing, among others, termed Industry 4.0 (Alaloul *et al.*, 2018; Kozlovska *et al.*, 2021). The term Industry 4.0 (IR4.0) was proposed by Germany in 2011, then was formally put forward as a concept at the Hannover Industrial Expo in April 2013 (Li and Yang, 2017). Since then, myriad research efforts to examine IR4.0 technologies, applications, benefits, and challenges have started. Such efforts have reached all industries, including the construction industry, termed the fourth construction revolution.

Recently, several governments have launched local programs to accelerate the development and deployment of IR4.0 technologies. The "High-Tech Strategy 2020" programme was established in Germany, where this concept was born; "Advanced Manufacturing Partnership" in the United States, "Made in China 2025" in China, and "La Nouvelle France Industrielle" in France (Dalenogare *et al.*, 2018). In Malaysia, “Industry4WRD” (National Policy on Industry 4.0) was launched in 2018 in response to IR4.0 in order to drive the digital transformation in Malaysia's manufacturing and related services sectors (Lau *et al.*, 2019b). In both developed and emerging countries, these programs aimed to disseminate IR4.0 concepts and technologies in across all



industries and businesses. Malaysia has been categorised as a technologically developing country (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2021). The Malaysian Government focused significant efforts to encourage construction industry members to implement IR4.0 as a transformative innovation to improve productivity and efficiency throughout the industry (Hussain *et al.*, 2019). More specifically, following the pace towards the fourth construction revolution, Malaysia has been considered as one of the leading countries to develop the “Construction 4.0 strategic plan” (CIDB, 2021), following Hong Kong “Construction 2.0” and UK “Construction 2025”. Moreover, according to Forcael *et al.* (2020), Malaysia was among the countries to lead IR4.0 digital revolution, with the highest number of publications.

The visionary idea of the fourth construction revolution or other synonyms such as Smart construction, Smart site, or Construction 4.0, have been put forward steadily by different actors to describe the trend towards IR4.0 implementation in the construction industry. Multiple scholars have brought diverse definitions in the term “Construction 4.0” (CR4.0). In the context, it has been defined as various IR4.0 related technologies to enable the digitisation, automation and integration of the construction process at all stages of the construction value chain (Lau *et al.*, 2019b). Based on this definition, the implementation of IR4.0 within the construction industry will affect the business process and practices (Adepoju and Aigbavboa, 2020b). Nevertheless, while most industries have moved to IR4.0 implementation, the construction industry has not fully integrated IR4.0 (Oesterreich and Teuteberg, 2016; Turk, 2021).

The significance of CR4.0 would rely on its ability to create new business areas and enhance performance, termed IR4.0 value-creation (IRVC) (Nagy *et al.*, 2018; Schreiber *et al.*, 2018). For the construction industry, the positive effects of implementing IR4.0 are visible in many areas. CR4.0 resulted in value creation of 5-20% cost savings (Niu *et al.*, 2018; Rastogi, 2015). Moreover, the created value of 10-30% time-saving provided by CR4.0 (Rastogi, 2015). Similarly, CR4.0 would improve 30-50% quality of construction projects (Kelly and Ilozor, 2019; Rastogi, 2015). Decision-making within the industry would also be enhanced due to big data analytics (Dubey *et al.*, 2019). Likewise, CR4.0 would be leading in communication and collaboration enhancement through the use of the cloud computing, Building

Information Modelling (BIM) and social media apps would be high among project team members. However, a corresponding shift, focusing on technology, people, and process, would be needed to gain those benefits and achieve IRVC (Mêda *et al.*, 2020). Fundamentally, new frameworks, businesses, term of references and readiness models for CR4.0 are required for its implementation (Oesterreich and Teuteberg, 2016).

CR4.0 has changed the nature of competitive resources by reshaping the structure and way of working of construction firms. In the competitive paradigm, construction firms face various technological, human, and process-related challenges (Mêda *et al.*, 2020). To gain and hold a competitive edge, construction firms needed to enhance the performance of CR4.0 implementation. The resource-based view (RBV) theory argued that firms could attain a competitive advantage and performance could be optimised through the use of strategic assets (Barney and Hesterly, 2019). In addition, the intellectual capital-based view (ICBV) argued that the most crucial strategic asset to achieve optimal performance would be the Intellectual Capital (IC) (Martín-de-Castro *et al.*, 2011). IC has been considered the keystone in implementing innovation (such as CR4.0) and business success (Duodu and Rowlinson, 2019). Profoundly, ICBV was mainly based on the RBV and the knowledge-based view (KBV) (Khalique *et al.*, 2018).

Intellectual Capital (IC) has been a promising resource for innovation management that may help with CR4.0 implementation readiness. It was indicated that knowledge management would be the current competitive asset, and firms who wisely manage their IC will succeed (Kori, 2017). According to Li *et al.* (2019), IC has been defined as valuable knowledge-related resources that organisations possess and use to create value and achieve a competitive advantage. Consequently, IC development and management could be positioned as critical pillars on which construction firms could rely on to achieve successful CR4.0 implementation readiness (Li *et al.*, 2021). The success of CR4.0 implementation would depend on the industry's unique characteristics. Notably, few studies indicated that construction firms have a limited ability to manage resources for effective CR4.0 implementation. However, decision-making regarding the orientation towards a higher level of IC developments could act as catalyst for CR4.0 implementation (Cabrita *et al.*, 2019).

The Knowledge-Based Innovation framework was developed, by Lu and Sexton (2009), to examine innovation in the built environment context using IC management. Based on their framework, it was propositioned that the CR4.0 implementation process should be viewed as a knowledge-based innovation, which occurred when the three IC dimensions; Human Capital (HC), Relationship Capital (RC), and Structure Capital (SC) - to be developed to achieve successful CR4.0 implementation readiness. Additionally, the people-process-technology framework has been used by multiple scholars to conceptualise and structure the main pillars of CR4.0 (Karmakar and Delhi, 2021; Mèda *et al.*, 2020; Oesterreich and Teuteberg, 2016). Thus, based on Knowledge-based Innovation and People-Process-Technology frameworks, this research would propose and use the IC perspective, including its three dimensions, to conceptualise the CR4.0 implementation critical criteria.

However, there has been a lack of knowledge on IC identification and management in the construction firms’ business environment and practical tools of deployment to achieve successful CR4.0 implementation readiness (Li *et al.*, 2021). As a result, the theoretical link between IC management and CR4.0 would be investigated in this research (Muñoz-La Rivera *et al.*, 2020). The research would seek to use ICBV theoretical link to develop a decision-making (DM) prototype for the management and development of the IC towards successful CR4.0 implementation readiness, as shown in Figure 1.1.

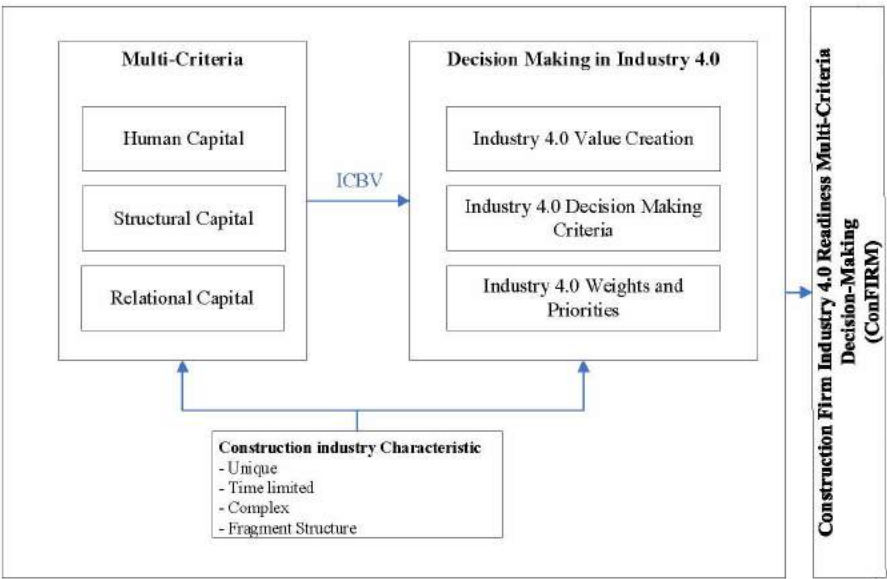


Figure 1.1 Theoretical links that guided this research

## 1.2 Problem Statement

IR4.0 initiatives' failure would have a severe impact on the firm due to the high cost of obtaining and running IR4.0 technologies, time-waste of personnel assigned to work on these technologies, and the competitive disadvantage of not having recent technologies, while competitors would have (Barham and Daim, 2020). In addition, a recent research found that 78% of firms were afraid of being disrupted or displaced because competitors had successfully implemented IR4.0 technologies (Davenport and Bean, 2018). Consequently firms undertake IR4.0 initiatives and step into the implementation process, firms would need to ensure that the chances of such an initiative being successful would be reasonably high (Barham, 2019). Therefore, a model, framework or prototype would be required to assist firms to be more confident and ready before IR4.0 is initiated (Sony and Naik, 2019b). In particular, a theoretically sound framework that would support decision-makers at every level of decision-making when considering whether to adopt IR4.0 and would allow decision-makers to customise the framework to a firm's requirements is obtained (Adepoju and Aigbavboa, 2020b).

Several research have been conducted into IR4.0 and its implementation readiness, particularly in the manufacturing industry (Lau *et al.*, 2019b). However, unlike the manufacturing industry, not much research regarding IR4.0 has been focused on the construction industry. Furthermore, the limited research conducted on CR4.0 did not consider the criteria that significantly impact the readiness of CR4.0 implementation or proposed prototypes to support decision-makers when considering whether to implement CR4.0, or not (Kozlovska *et al.*, 2021). Understanding the unique and specific nature of the construction projects, with specific time-limitations, complex organisations and fragmented structure must be understood before addressing the CR4.0's critical criteria which would lead to an effective implementation process (Dallasega *et al.*, 2018).

According to a recent survey in Malaysia (Alaloul *et al.*, 2019), 53% of Malaysian construction professionals were unfamiliar with applying CR4.0 technology in the industry, whereas only 34% have encountered some of the

technologies during their work experience. Surprisingly, 13% of respondents were uncertain about the linkages between the technologies described and CR4.0. Only after being presented with a list of technologies connected to CR4.0, respondents changed their minds. After the shift in perspective, 47% of respondents were familiar with CR4.0 technologies.

The construction industry would be one of the most profitable sectors in the world and contributed massively to a country's economic growth (Karmakar and Delhi, 2021) with a 6% contribution of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Tayurskaya *et al.*, 2020). By 2022, the industry would be expected to contribute up to 13% of global GDP (Maskuriy *et al.*, 2019b). Furthermore, the construction industry would have a significant impact on other sectors such as transportation, education, and health (Adepoju and Aigbavboa, 2020b). For Malaysia, CIDB (2015) reported that more than 120 industries relied on the construction industry, indicating the importance of the industry as an element of economic development for Malaysia. The Malaysian Ministry of Finance reported that the construction industry GDP contribution was 4.9% for 2019 (CIDB, 2021). Undoubtedly, the construction industry would be critical to any country's economic growth and development.

CR4.0 implementation resulted in multiple benefits and value creation for construction firms. Yet, as indicated by Aripin *et al.* (2019), majority of the Malaysian construction firms have not managed to implement the CR4.0 technologies to keep up with the automotive or manufacturing sectors. Notably, in a recent report by NVP (2020), 74% of manufacturing companies indicated that they had not achieved measurable results from implementing Big Data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies, as presented in Figure 1.2. Value creation from CR4.0 would not be an easy task; construction industry adoption of CR4.0 and the driving of measurable results from these investments, would represent a multi-year journey. As illustrated in Figure 1.2, it is revealed that 78% of the firms failed to conduct digital implementation (Everest-Group, 2019).

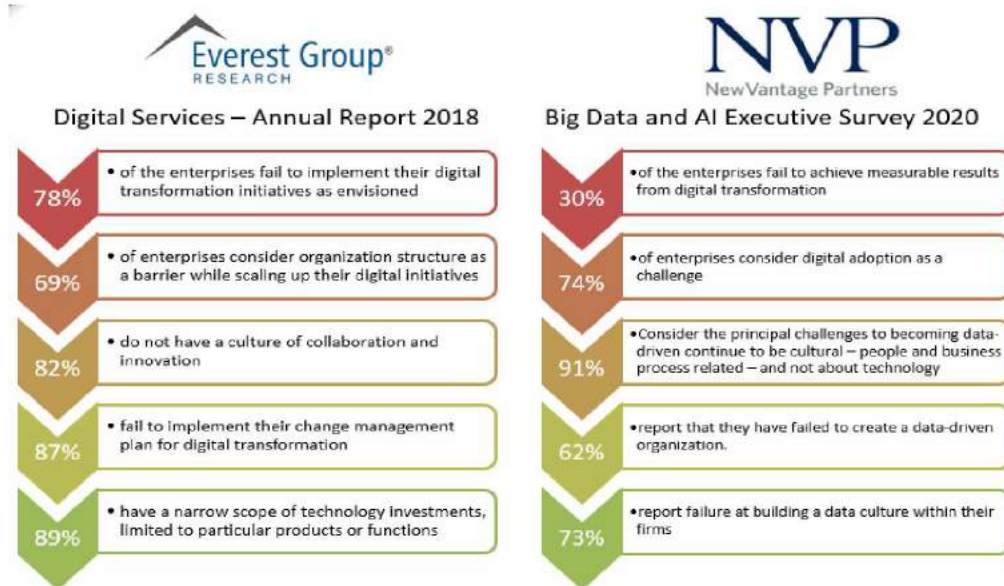


Figure 1.2 IR4.0 implementation surveys and reports

Multiple factors attributed to people, process, and organisation culture (not technology) have been cited as key challenges of CR4.0 implementation (Khalifa and Daim, 2021). Similarly, the results from Everest Group Everest-Group (2019) reported organisation structure (69%), collaboration and innovation (82%), and failure to implement a change management plan (87%) as the main challenges. Interestingly, top managers now realised that the most significant barrier to IR4.0 implementations within firms was not technology but issues relating to people, culture and process, as reported by NVP (NVP, 2020), where, 91% of managers agreed that people and process-related factors represented the most significant barrier to implementing Big Data and AI.

One solution that many scholars have suggested to address those challenges would be through the management and development of IC (Asif, 2020; Cabrita *et al.*, 2019; Khaliq *et al.*, 2018; Maria Serena *et al.*, 2019; Prakasa, 2018; Sengil and Duran, 2019; Stachová *et al.*, 2019; Uysal, 2019). Yet, for the Malaysian construction firms, the role of the IC has remained unclear, reflected by the relatively low level of IC management in Malaysian construction firms (Khaliq and Pablos, 2015). Yitmen (2011) indicated that the IC components were essential sources of competitiveness and innovation performance within the engineering firms. Moreover, Khaliq and Pablos

(2015) showed that 50.5% of the variance in the performance of Malaysian construction firms was jointly explained by the IC variables.

Consequently, the DM prototype for CR4.0 implementation readiness using IC perspective would be needed to consider the various characteristics of the construction industry. Such a model could be used to forecast the readiness of CR4.0 by addressing multiple issues in its implementation: firstly by identifying potential criteria that significantly impact the readiness of CR4.0 implementation, secondly by supporting CR4.0 decision-making by calculating the CR4.0 implementation readiness, and finally by providing guidance where corrective/preventive actions are needed, based on the assessment, before starting the implementation.

### **1.3 Research Gap**

Several research gaps that this research aimed to fulfil were highlighted by reviewing literature. Although the literature addressed the IR4.0 importance and applications in the construction domain, they were however lacking in investigating the key influencing criteria for the successful IR4.0 implementation in the construction environment (Maskuriy *et al.*, 2019b). Previous research on CR4.0 had only focused on the applications, awareness, and challenges while frameworks, business, readiness and maturity models have not been developed (García de Soto *et al.*, 2019). There have been a lot of focus on 'why' construction firms needed to adopt digital technologies, however there has been less focus on 'how' they could realise their expected benefits and generate value simultaneously (Love and Matthews, 2019). Hossain and Nadeem (2019) conducted research to identify the state of art of CR4.0. They concluded that it would be critical to recognise the primary criteria to implement new technologies peculiar to the construction industry and to manage them appropriately. Thus, much research would still be needed to fill the gaps and to overcome the current and future challenges (Shahinmoghdam and Motamedi, 2019).

Moreover, it was revealed that the relevant literature were lacking theoretical underpinning. The current literature mainly focusing on particular

technical dimensions of CR4.0 implementation process and not offering guidance on handling the whole decision-making and implementation process (Forcael *et al.*, 2020). In addition, there has been limited research about evaluating CR4.0 implementation criteria under different perspectives. It was revealed by previous reviews that only a handful of papers had even tried to group the criteria of CR4.0 (Lau *et al.*, 2019a; Muñoz-La Rivera *et al.*, 2020). The taxonomy of CR4.0 critical criteria under different perspectives could help significantly to represent the big picture and the actors around CR4.0 for better understanding and addressing of those criteria. The ICBV theory was used to fill this as a theory underpinning this research, following the suggestions of multiple scholars (Asif, 2020; Khalique *et al.*, 2018; Maria Serena *et al.*, 2019; Prakasa, 2018; Sengil and Duran, 2019; Stachová *et al.*, 2019; Uysal, 2019). For instance, Love and Matthews (2019) referred to the three dimensions of IC when they stated:

If construction firms do not conduct a benefits management assessment before implementing digital technologies, their expected efficiencies are unlikely to materialise, as strategic (i.e. customer), organisational (i.e. structure), and cognitive (i.e. people) changes will be overlooked.

(Love and Matthews, 2019)

Fundamentally, construction firms must rethink their business models and to innovate on how they manage their IC to achieve CR4.0 implementation readiness (Cerezo *et al.*, 2019; Muñoz-La Rivera *et al.*, 2020). As the ICs are promising knowledge-based resources for innovation, there has been a lack of knowledge on their identification in the construction firms' business environment and business models of deploying them to achieve CR4.0 readiness (Kori, 2017). Therefore, this research would aim to cover this gap by using IC perspectives to develop CR4.0 implementation readiness prototype; such as knowledge about the impact of IC and their sub-criteria in order to enhance the understanding of construction managers and decision-makers on when, where, and how to implement CR4.0.

Also, there has been limited empirical and statistical research about the dynamics of internal and external criteria surrounding CR4.0 (Hussain *et al.*, 2019).



According to Maskuriy *et al.* (2019b), most of the publications reviewed used systematic and scoping review methodologies to demonstrate the value of CR4.0. Thus, Patrucco *et al.* (2020) recommended that future research to use survey studies to statistically test the links between CR4.0 technology, organisation, and performance. Similarly, Maskuriy *et al.* (2019a) asserted that qualitative research would be required in order to have in-depth knowledge of the theories that drive CR4.0. Consequently, a structured framework would be needed for successful technology adoption and digitalisation in the construction industry (Muñoz-La Rivera *et al.*, 2020). According to Karmakar and Delhi (2021), quantitative research would be needed to better understand the interactions between various CR4.0 technologies and the dynamics of implementation.

Moreover, Lau *et al.* (2019b) indicated that most IR4.0 roadmaps or strategic plans focused on the manufacturing sectors instead of the construction industry. This would increase the need to construct a prototype to assess IR4.0 implementation readiness, focusing on the construction sector (Bai *et al.*, 2020; Dallasega, 2018). Moreover, while IR4.0 related studies used single-criteria models, the construction industry required an MCDM because its characteristics were unique, time-limited, complex, and having a fragmented structure rather than the existing manufacturing-focused tools (Adepoju and Aigbavboa, 2020a). A recent review of CR4.0 in construction management research concluded that there were many research gaps in research that were mainly looking at new technology in construction projects (Schönbeck *et al.*, 2020). The gap between IR4.0 and the construction industry would continue to widen as long as there is a lack of models for technological adoption and new construction techniques (Kozlovska *et al.*, 2021). Thus, realising the specific nature of the construction industry while addressing the CR4.0 critical criteria would essentially lead to an effective implementation readiness (Aghimien *et al.*, 2021).

Subsequently, the identified research gaps very well implied the need to integrate the ICBV theory and CR4.0 readiness. Also, it demonstrated the need to develop the MCDM prototype to account the multiple dimensions of CR4.0 implementation readiness. However, a speedy decision-making system would be required, which can be built via a digitalised automation system. This digitalised

automation system was developed using MS Excel because of its convenience, efficiency, and effectiveness. Figure 1.3 showed the multiple research gaps in this research, contributing significantly to the body of knowledge with novelty.

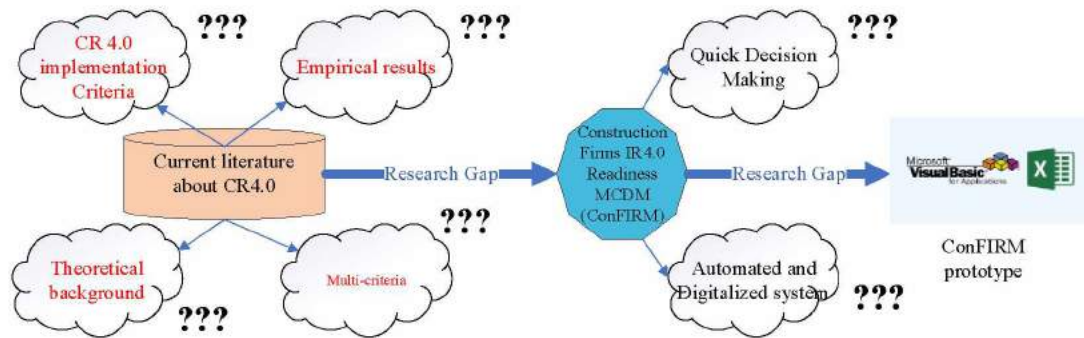


Figure 1.3 Research Gap

#### 1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Research

This research would aim to develop a prototype, that could be used by construction firms planning to implement CR4.0 to support their decision-making process, named as 'Construction Firm's Industry 4.0 Readiness MCDM (ConFIRM)'. This would integrate the experts' judgement with MCDM techniques to develop a convenient, computer-aided prototype for construction industry practitioners. Therefore, to achieve this aim, four objectives have been drawn up, including:

- i. To identify the critical criteria of IC that affect CR4.0 implementation readiness.
- ii. To investigate the level of significance of IC that affect CR4.0 implementation readiness.
- iii. To analyse the scoring and weightage factor for Construction Firm's Industry 4.0 Readiness MCDM (ConFIRM).
- iv. To develop the automated MCDM prototype that would be able to assess CR4.0 implementation readiness.

## 1.5 Scope of the Research

This research would focus solely on implementing IR4.0 in construction firms in Malaysia. It was conducted following a thorough examination of relevant technology implementation readiness evaluation techniques utilised in the construction sector.

The scope of the research has been limited to construction firms, sometimes known as Architecture, Engineering and Construction firms. In terms of IR4.0 coverage, the research debated the business side of the implementation process, referred to as IR4.0 Value Creation. Next, the relationship between IC management and CR4.0 implementation readiness was elaborated. However, the relationship was established based on findings from previous literature and the judgement of class A contractors in Malaysia. Class A contractors are registered as grade 7 (G7) contractors with the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) in Malaysia and are granted permission to handle construction projects with no bidding limit. As such, their opinions would matter because of the large number and size of construction projects they have undertaken and executed. Also, class A contractors would have sufficient awareness on CR4.0 practices as opined by Muthusamy and Chew (2020) and Onubi and Hassan (2020), which justified the need to seek for their judgement. For instance, contractors who participate in tenders are required to have practical knowledge of BIM usage. In Malaysia, contractors with government projects valued at RM100 million and above would have the legal responsibility and obligation to adopt BIM starting from the year 2019.

In terms of context, this research would mainly focus on construction industry in Malaysia, although it was reduced to a few specific regional boundaries within the country. Prior research indicated that, in Malaysia BIM is 78% adopted by construction firms in the central region (Rafindadi *et al.*, 2020). The research selected Kuala Lumpur and Selangor as the States and Federal Territories to focus on when collecting data for the research fieldwork. As a result, 75% of data was collected from those states. Finally, this research was carried out at the level of the firm rather than the individual, to gather details of firms' operations.

The researcher encountered several challenges during data collection due to Movement Control Order (MCO) being implemented in response to the coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, resulting in difficulties locating respondents, miscommunication, limited access to high-ranking personnel, time constraints, financial issues, and limited access to the construction sites. As a result, after considering various data collection techniques, the experts' panel technique was chosen as an alternative research approach that did not require a large sample size (Barham and Daim, 2020). In addition, as a response to social distancing, meetings were conducted online using video conferencing tools, and the statistical data were obtained via online surveys.

## **1.6 Significance of the Research**

This research would explore and presented a new innovative computer-based automation prototype for the CR4.0 implementation readiness and IC management. Mostly the concept indicated that CR4.0 initiatives would incur a higher cost during the initial stage and this has been considered as one of the major issues. For that drawback, investors, developers, and other major stakeholders involved in construction projects were reluctant to deal with the unwanted financial critical situation. Therefore, most of the investors would have minimal interest to undertake the CR4.0 implementation and less effort being put forward to justify the worth of future and value creation. As a contribution to the body of knowledge, the findings from this research would provide a basis to CR4.0 critical criteria and their relative weighted values to serve as a tool for developers and investors within the construction industry. Likewise, the findings would serve as the foundation for government to achieve their targets and goals set for 2025 (CIDB, 2021).

The construction investors and managers are welcoming the automation solution which would be workable on the computer-based system and could easily assess CR4.0 implementation readiness by managing their IC more effectively and efficiently. The integrated approach of IC management and CR4.0 would be able to provide an easy, quick responsive prototype of decision-making for the construction

firms. Needless to say, there have been lots of tools available to carry out the IR4.0 for manufacturing firms, somehow innovative integrated approach focusing on the construction sector is still very much lacking behind.

Furthermore, the research would also present the automation of ConFIRM in the industry and would provide feedback on the prototype. Project managers and other skilled stakeholders are still lacking behind due to the unavailability of the integrated computer-based automated MCDM prototypes for CR4.0. Therefore, this computer-based automation of CR4.0 implementation readiness which integrated IC and CR4.0 would be a massive helping prototype for the investors, developers and other stakeholders as a new innovative solution to a high CR4.0 implementation readiness.

Moreover, In Malaysia, Industry4WRD Readiness Assessment (Industry4WRD-RA) is a comprehensive programme to help firms assess their capabilities and readiness to adopt IR4.0 technologies and processes. The assessment uses a pre-determined set of indicators to understand their present capabilities and gaps, from which will enable firms to prepare feasible strategies and plans to move towards IR4.0 (MITI, 2018). Since Industry4WRD-RA targets the manufacturing segment, ConFIRM prototype could serve as the readiness assessment programme to target the construction segment. In addition, ConFIRM could be integrated with “Construction 4.0 strategic plan (2021-2025) (CIDB, 2021)

## **1.7 Research Framework of Thesis**

Qualitative and quantitative research methods were included in the development of the research framework to attain the outlined objectives. The research framework would be divided into three phases: Variables Development, Variables Analysis, and DM Model Development.

As shown in Figure 1.4, Phase 1 entailed a systematic review of relevant literature to obtain research topics. In Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, the literature review and research

methodology were presented. In addition, semi-structured interviews with construction engineers were undertaken throughout Phase 1 and shown in Chapter 4.

The online interviews with the expert panel were covered in Phase 2. A set of questionnaires was designed and validated by professionals to collect data in this phase, then was employed during the online interviews. Then, the collected data was analysed using The Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP), Decision making trial and evaluation laboratory (DEMATEL), and Analytic Network Process (ANP).

The rapid prototyping approach was used to construct the self-assessment automated MCDM prototype in Phase 3. MS Excel's Userform was used as the environment to build the prototype. Desirability curves were used to assign values for each metric, and Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution (TOPSIS) was used to calculate the CR4.0 implementation readiness. Finally, the case study method was used to validate the prototype.

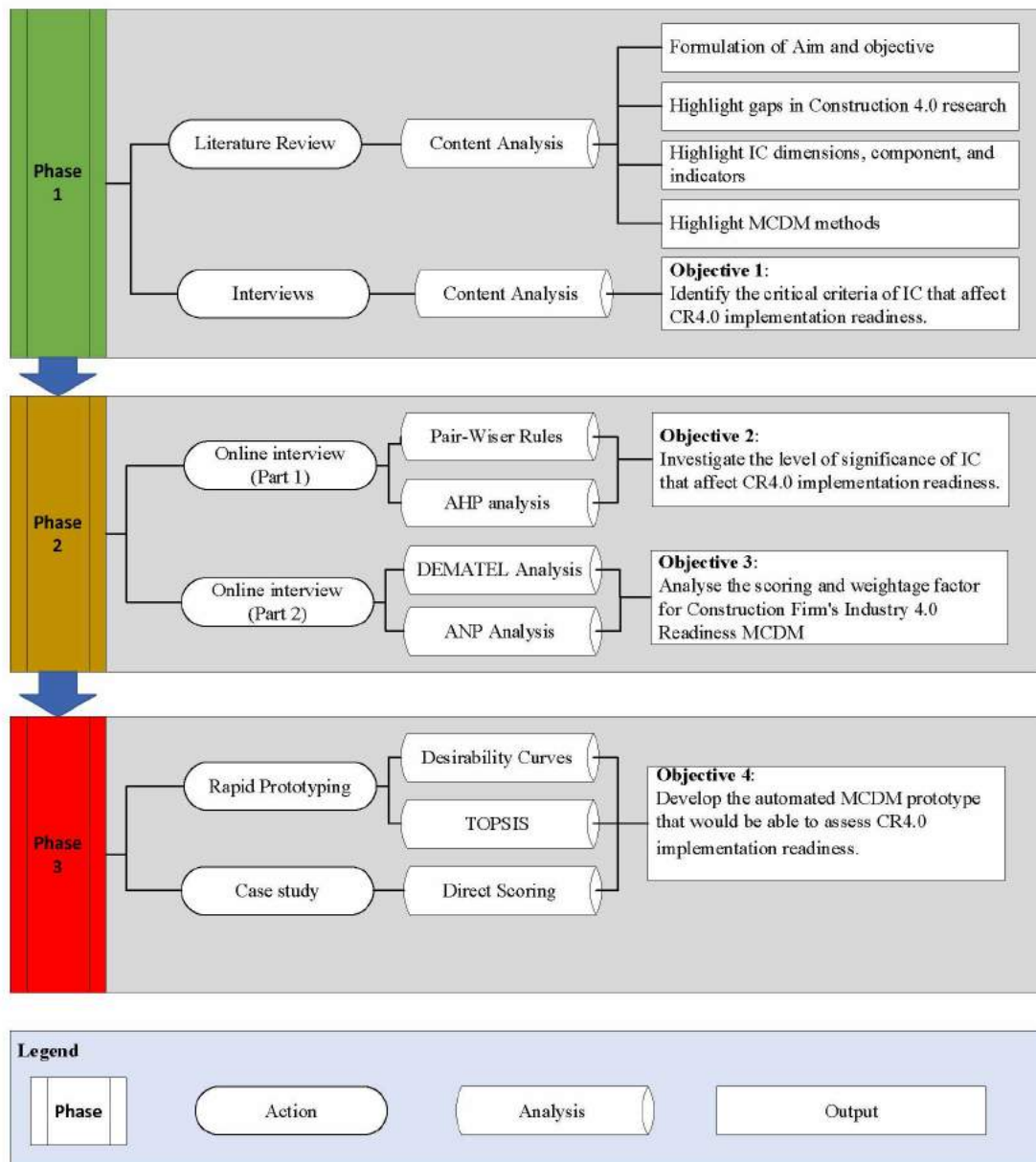


Figure 1.4 Research framework

## 1.8 Structure of the Research

Chapter 1 (Introduction), Chapter 2 (Literature Review), Chapter 3 (Methodology), Chapter 4 (Data Analysis and Discussions), Chapter 5 (Model Development), and Chapter 6 (Conclusion) would make up this research. The contents of each chapter are explained in the following paragraphs.

Chapter 1 would outline the introduction and background of the research, as well as the problem statement and research significance. In addition, this chapter would provide the research's aim and objectives as well as the research gaps. This chapter would also include the research framework, scope, and chapter summary.

Chapter 2 would cover the literature review of the theoretical underpinning of CR4.0 and IC management and criteria. In addition, MCDM techniques would also be discussed in this chapter. As a result, the IC meta-model affecting CR4.0 implementation readiness is established in this chapter.

Chapter 3 would explain the research methodology used in this research. It also would discuss the research phases, questionnaires development, data collection procedures, data analysis methods, and the overall research design. The automated prototype development, including methods, analysis, and validation through case studies, would also be covered in this chapter.

Chapter 4 would present the results, data analysis, and discussions. This chapter would provide a comprehensive picture of the data acquired from expert panel' responses to interviews and questionnaires.

Chapter 5 would discuss the development of a self-assessment prototype for assessing CR4.0 implementation readiness. It would depict the application's user interface. In addition, as a metric development, this chapter describing the creation of the desirability curves for each IC criteria. Furthermore, the case studies were analysed and discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 6 would present the conclusions and recommendations for future research. This chapter would sum up the key findings and results of the research. In addition, the research's limitations would also be discussed in this chapter. It would provide several recommendations for future research. The references and appendices can be found near the end of this research.



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## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

### Indexed Journal

1. **Mansour, H.**, Aminudin, E., & Mansour, T. (2021). Implementing industry 4.0 in the construction industry-strategic readiness perspective. *International Journal of Construction Management*, DOI: [10.1080/15623599.2021.1975351](https://doi.org/10.1080/15623599.2021.1975351) (WoS: ESCI, SCOPUS: Q2)
2. **Mansour, H.**, Aminudin, E., Omar, B., Zakaria, R., Lau, S. E. N., & Al-Sarayreh, A. (2021). Industry 4.0 and construction performance: From literature review to conceptual framework. *Malaysian Construction Research Journal, Specialissue13(2)*, 53-67. (SCOPUS: Q4)
3. **Mansour, H.**, Aminudin, E., Omar, B., Zakaria, R., & Abidin, N. I. A. (2021). Planning impact and mediations on the quality of construction projects: Case study in Jordan. *Malaysian Construction Research Journal, Specialissue13(2)* , 212-228. (SCOPUS: Q4)
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5. Alsarayreh, A. I. M., Othman, M. L. B., Abdullah, R. B., Sulaiman, A. B., Poi-Ngian, S., & **Mansour, H.** (2020). Experimental investigation on structural lightweight aggregate concrete using palm-oil clinker and expanded perlite aggregates. *Journal of Engineering Science and Technology*, 15(6), 3741-3756 (WoS: ESCI, SCOPUS: Q3)

### Non-Indexed Journal

1. **Mansour, H.**, Aminuddin, E., Omar, B., & Zakaria, R. (2019). A Conceptual Model on Industry 4.0 and Construction Performance: Resource-Based View. *Research Journal of Applied Sciences*, 14: 454-461. DOI: 10.36478/rjasci.2019.454.461.

### Indexed Conference Proceedings

1. **Mansour, H.**, Aminudin, E., Mansour, T., Abdin, N.I., & Lou, E., (2021). Research-Based View in Construction Project Management Research: A Meta-Analysis. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science (Presented in ICRMBEE20201)*
2. **Mansour, H.**, Aminudin, E., Mansour, T., Abdin, N.I., & Roslan, A.F., (2021). A bibliometric Study of Industry 4.0 in Construction Industry Using Oesterriech and Teuteberg (2016) As A Key Marker. . *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science (Presented in ICRMBEE20201)*.

## **Patent & Copyright**

1. “MULTI-CRITERIA DECISION-MAKING FOR 4TH CONSTRUCTION REVOLUTION USING INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL PERSPECTIVE”, Team: Eeydzah Aminudin, Husam Mansour, Nur Izieadiana Abidin, Santi Lau, Fatimah Zakaria, Patent filing: LY2021E07054.