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## Chapter Four

### TIPS ON SCHOLARLY RESEARCH AND PAPER WRITING: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE ISLAMIC SCIENCES

Ahmad Murtala

In the name of the Lord, The Beneficent, The Merciful.

#### 0.1 Introduction

Our Lord, the Almighty, has designed the whole mankind with two extra-ordinary inseparable things, namely 'intellect' and the 'curiosity to know'. Without intellect, knowledge, of course, could not totally be acquired; while knowledge alone would not be attained in any sustainable perfection. Knowledge, however, is a treasure house whose keys are queries. Due to this undeniable fact, one has to strive hard to acquire knowledge, which is only "attained by learning," as Abdullah bn Mas'ud, the early Islamic scholar and companion to the Prophet of Islam (SAWS), had rightly said. Yahya bn Abi Katheer, a disciple of the Prophets' companions, had also said: "Knowledge would not be attained while one is at ease."<sup>2</sup>

Allah, the All-Wise, creates in human beings the innate desire to know; an instinct that intuitively drives even an infant to experience in order to learn, to move from the known to the unknown and explore what would benefit him and, probably, those around him. There are numerous

verses in the Qur'an and the *Hadiths*, which ascertain the plausibility of such an instinct. Allah says, "Say, can those who know equal to those who do not know? Only they will remember; (those) who are 'people of understanding'." (Q 23:9). He also said, "He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good. And none will remember except those of understanding" (Q 2:269). He even told the Prophet (PBUH) to say, "And say 'My Lord, increase me in my knowledge'" (Q 20:114).

Conducting researches, writing papers and books on whatever branch of knowledge, be it Law, languages mathematics, geography, engineering and so forth, is jurisprudentially a communal obligation, according to Imam al Zarkashi<sup>3</sup>, mandatory upon the entire Muslim community. If entirely failed, they are all sinful, while if a few of them undertake the responsibility it is enough. Once undertaken by some of the community, it then becomes imperative upon them alone.

This chapter hopes to lead the prospective researcher to have a thorough understanding of the basic methods of tackling research and how good writing should be accomplished in the humanities.

## 1.1 THE CONCEPT OF RESEARCH

People have different approaches to solve a problem facing them. Some may view an issue true or false just because it has been popularly held in the society either way. This is called the "Tenacity Approach" and it is clear that so many facts might remain hidden if such a method is

applied. While some people may answer the question or tackle the issue applying the “Intuition Approach”, that is, to believe in what he/she singlehandedly feels good or bad about, or say the truth is self-evident by using their own reasoning without further investigations. The fallacy of this mode is obvious, because the process that such a thing has passed through before becoming true would not be clear to everybody. Supporting evidences must have been supplemented for accuracy otherwise it would remain obscure. The other method is the “Authority Approach”. It is where a trusted source is given priority over scrutiny and thorough verification. An answer for a question arising given by parents, teachers, elders, etc. is regarded by the people who adhere to this method as absolutely correct no matter how ungrounded or unsound it appears.

Such <sup>three</sup> four approaches would not, for sure, quench a qualified researcher's thirst and may not even cater for his methodological wonderings. The only method that stands for the needs of the researcher and answers all his yearnings is the “Scientific Approach” (*Al-Bahath al-'Ilmi*). It is the only method that involves all the other approaches and brings them together under objective examinations and analysis for the sake of attaining truth and discovering the facts irrespective of the sources.

Take an example of the truthfulness of the Prophet (PBUH). This, of course, is an 'issue' all Muslims believed in because it is authoritatively stated in the Qur'an (the authority approach). While others may answer

in the positive just because they wholeheartedly feel it is OK (the intuitive approach). At the same time, some may deem it plausible for being believed by Muslims worldwide. But the Qur'an draws the attention of Muslims and non-Muslims to ponder over the evidences for that (the Scientific approach). Allah says: "Say, I only advise you of one thing-that you stand for Allah, (seeking the truth) in pairs and individually, and then give thought. There is not in your companion - (the Prophet)- any madness. He is only a warner to you before a severe punishment" (Q 34:46).

Thus, scientific research (*al-Bahath al-'ilmi*) can be defined as "an organized, objective, controlled, qualitative or quantitative practical analysis of one or more variables <sup>4</sup>". It is also defined as "the process of arriving at dependable solution to problems through the planned and systemic collection, analysis and interpretation of data <sup>5</sup>".

## **1.2 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF RESEARCH**

Below are five basic characteristics identified for scientific research (*al-Bahath al-'ilmi*) regardless of the field of the research <sup>6</sup>:

- 1- **Publicity:** The research is primarily intended to be conducted for the benefit of the entire humanity; hence, it is free and can be shared among the researchers without manipulation or hiding anything.
- 2- **Objectivity:** Discovering fact and understanding its nature are the backbone of the scientific research. For this reason, the whimsical judgment of researchers and their biased interpretations of facts are disregarded.

- 3- **Practicality:** The research should be based on perceived, experienced, measured and anything reality. Therefore, the non-sensical explanations of events are discarded outright. I choose the word 'Practicality' to denounce the popularly used word 'Empiricism', for it denotes a philosophical idea of rejecting metaphysical explanation, which, in essence, goes contrary to the Islamic belief in the unseen.
- 4- **Systematic and Cumulative:** All researches are anchored and dependable on each other due to the fact that no single research, in whatsoever branch of knowledge, stands alone, nor does it rise and fall by itself. Cumulativeness indicates the continuation of an idea or some part of it from one research to another. Previous researches are systematically building rocks for new ones. Conversely, it has to go under examination and reproducing later.
- 5- **Predictive:** A well-organised research is, undoubtedly, inspiring. It opens up the way to understand the future and even predict the happening of a phenomenon or some events in the future.

### **1.3 THE PURPOSES OF RESEARCH**

Human beings are divinely endowed with numerously great bounties, like the faculties of the physical senses and the faculty of insight and understanding. They are also often urged to positively exercise and sharpen them to the utmost. For this reason and many others, Allah declares that all the faculties should be questioned in the day of

resurrection. He says: “And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart-about all those one will be questioned.” (Q 18:36).

People of course differ in the main purpose, which gears them to engage in research. But we can pinpoint some as general purposes as follows:

- a- A research is carried on for the purpose of understanding the injunctions of the Lawgiver, so as to worship Him accordingly. For this reason Allah says: “And I do not create the jinn and mankind except to worship me” (Q 51: 56).
- b- Quenching the flue of the curiosity instinct: Satisfying such desire has been one of the major drivers towards conducting excellent research. Sheikh al Islam Ibn Taimiyyah talked about the importance of research in pleasing the human psyche. He said: “If a person doesn't thoroughly encompass the essence of things that he is in intense interest of, that would definitely develop a thorn in his mind”<sup>7</sup>.
- c- Aiding in the entire educational domain in higher learning institutions and sharing the knowledge with the interested public.
- d- Solving societal and communal problems. Like discovering a practical fatwa (Islamic ruling) for a delicate issue.

Muslim scholars, precisely Ibn Hazm, have stipulated seven aims



which the ideal research whatsoever could not go beyond. He reaffirmed that they are categorically seven, no eighth option except a waste of paper. They are :

- 1- Initiating a new way or approach
- 2- The accomplishment of shortcomings.
- 3- Clearing ambiguity.
- 4- Abridgment of lengthy books.
- 5- Unification of scattered points.
- 6- Re-arrangement of mixed up points.
- 7- Correcting error.

When writing a research, one has to think over it whether it falls under one of the abovementioned options for him to energetically undertake that research.

#### **1.4 THE BROAD AREAS OF RESEARCH**

There are numerous areas of research in the humanities, including the following:

- 1- **THE QUR'AN, PROPHETIC HADITHS AND JURISPRUDENCIAL ISSUES:** The Qur'an serves as the masterpiece in which all Muslims believe and analyse their life under its framework. The book is all encompassing and has urged humankind to ponder over its contents as saying: “(This is) a blessed Book which We have revealed to you, that they might reflect upon its verses and that those of understanding would be reminded” (Q 38:29). And it is said: “Then do they not reflect upon the Qur'an? If it had been from any other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction” (Q 4:82).

The researches, which had been conducted, by the early and contemporaneous scholars in different branches of Qur'anic exegesis and jurisprudence all are for perpetuating this sublime purpose.

- 2- **NATURE:** Nature is the widest domain of research. It includes all the natural sciences like physics, chemistry, and others areas. Muslims are urged by the Qur'an to engage in researches in these fields for the betterment of the world. Allah says, "Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, and the great ships which sail through the sea with that which benefits people, and what Allah has sent down from the heavens of rain, giving life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness and dispersing therein every kind of moving creature, and His directing of the winds and the clouds controlled between the heaven and earth, are signs for people who use reason" (Q 2:164).

Guided by the same Islamic teachings, the Muslims of the first generations were successful in thriving and exploring the secrets of nature. George Sarton, one of the leading Western Philosophers, had some times breathed out this truth, saying: "The main task of mankind was accomplished by Muslims. The greatest philosopher, Al-Farabi, was a Muslim; the greatest mathematicians, Abul Kamil and Ibrahim Ibn Sinan, were Muslims; the greatest geographer and encyclopedia, Al-Masudi, was a Muslim; the greatest historian, Al-Tabari, was still a Muslim."

In the historical background of many natural and social sciences, Muslim names were shining at the medieval ages. Al-Khwarizmi (Algorism) (d.780) had been the master of Algebra, Calculus and Astronomy. It is discovered that even the computer system was entirely built upon Alkwarizmi's contributions to algorism. And with the exception of the renown ancient 'Muslim' scientists like Ibn Sina, etc. other rarely mentioned scholars, who made a lot of contributions, include<sup>10</sup>: Al-Asma'i (d.740) in Zoology, Botany and Animal Husbandry; Al-Dinawari, Abu-Hanifa Ahmed Ibn Dawood (d.815) in Mathematics and Linguistics; Al Balkhi in Geography (the World Map) (d.816), Thabit Ibn Qurrah (Thebit) (d.836) in Mechanics, Geometry and Anatomy; Al-Farghani, Abu al-Abbas (Al-Fraganus) (d.860) in Civil Engineering; Al-Razi (Rhazes) (864-930) in Medicine, Ophthalmology and Chemistry; Al-Kindi (d.873) in Physics, Optics, Metallurgy and Oceanography; Abbas ibn Firnas (d.888) in Mechanics; Thabit Ibn Qurrah (d.908) in Engineering; Ibn Hawqal (d.943) in Geography (the World Map); Al Majrett'ti Abu-al Qasim (d.950) in Alchemy and Mathematics; Ibn Al-Haitham (Alhazen) (965-1040) in Physics and Optics; Abu Rayhan Al-Biruni (973-1048) in History and Linguistics; Ibn Al-Baitar Diauddin (Bitar) (d.1097) in Botany and Pharmacology; Al-Idrisi (Dreses) (d.1099) in Geography, Zoology and the World Map (the First Globe); Ghiyath al-Din al Kashani (d.1424) in Numerical Analysis and Computation.

- 3- **HUMAN BEINGS:** Human beings themselves are also an area of research. This includes all the human activities and their body functioning. The Qur'an opens numerous doors before the

researcher among which are culture, language and the human physique and psyche, etc. Allah says in the Qur'an: "And on the earth are signs for the certain in faith. And in yourselves. Then will you not see?" (Q51: 20-21). And He also says: "We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth" (Q42:53)

**HISTORY:** History is another face of research. The attention of mankind is called upon to study history in the Qur'an in a number of verses, like: "Have they not travelled through the land and observed (what was) the end of those (that lived) before them? They were more numerous than themselves and greater in strength and in impression on the land, but they were not availed by what they used to earn." (Q 40: 82).

History is, indeed, full of events happened in the past, and that are currently in progress in order to have a prospect of what will be attained by individuals and society in the future. It also exposes the causative factors that led to the success or fall of some societies and emperors. The emergence and spread of cultures, aspects of language, learning institutions, the economy, politics, the status of woman and children and other societal phenomena, all are available areas that can be covered by research in history.

## 1.5 THE IMPEDIMENTS TO CONDUCTING SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH.

A careful viewing of the above characteristics of scientific research will reveal that a competent researcher would try his best to divert from all the barriers that can hinder him from attaining the truth. However, the Qur'an has considerably highlighted some five additional impediments, which have been accomplished in the area. These are as follows <sup>12</sup>:

- a- Conjecture (al-Dhann): A researcher must avoid mere guess, assumptions and developing a pure conjectural hypothesis. There should be firm evidences and concrete proofs that have been cemented by certainty and accuracy. Allah says: "And if you obey most of those on the earth, they will mislead you far away from Allah's path. They follow nothing but conjecture, and they do nothing but lies" (Q 6: 116). He also says: "And most of them follow nothing but conjecture. Certainly, conjecture can be of no avail against the truth" (Q 10:36).
  
- b- Avoidance of Rush (al-Tasarru'): A good research needs to be conducted diligently far from any haste or rush. The Qur'an guides Muslims to be very careful before taking any conclusive action in whatever matter. Allah says, "O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, verify it, least you should harm people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful" (Q 49:6). He also said about unbelievers, "Rather, they have denied that which they encompass not in knowledge and whose interpretation has not yet come to them" (Q 10: 39).

- c- Blind Imitation (al-Taqlid): A qualified researcher is to stand on his own ground in the yearning for truth. Following the footsteps of some people such as ancestors, friends or custom, without actually knowing their background would not befit the curiosity of a truth-searcher. Allah says, “And when it is said to them, come to what Allah has revealed and the Messenger, they say, ‘Sufficient for us is that upon which we found our fathers.’ Even though their fathers knew nothing, nor were they guided” (Q 5:104).
- d- Whims (Ittibai' al-Hawa): Sometimes a research may be biased due to the researcher's inclination to some whimsical inspirations, such as passion, prejudice and preconceived ideas or being coerced by some authority. Such a state of mind would definitely turn the research to be subjective and the conclusion would, of course, be partial, incomplete and abortive. The absolute truth, no doubt, must be cast away or partly isolated somewhere along the way. On this, the Qur'an said: “Follow not personal inclination, lest you not be just” (Q 4:135). Allah drew the attention of Prophet David that: “Judge between the people in truth and do not follow your own desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of Allah” (Q 38:26). Mujahid bn Jabr said, “The shy person and the arrogant one will not learn the knowledge”<sup>13</sup>.
- e- Fear of magic and superstitions (al-Sihr Wa Taqalid): Some researchers do fear the influence of magic and consequently

may not follow due process to conduct a reasonable and fruitful research. Fear of anything other than Allah exterminates the spiritual vigour of the research. Researchers are advised not to indulge in the research arena with their own pre-set opinions. For this reason and many more, Allah told Moses that: "He said, rather, you throw. And suddenly their ropes and staffs seemed to him from their magic that they were moving like snakes. And he sensed within himself apprehension, did Moses. We (Allah) said, "Fear not. Indeed, it is you who are superior. And throw what is in your right hand; it will swallow up what they have crafted. What they have crafted is but the trick of a magician, and the magician will not succeed wherever he is" (Q 20:66-9). It is, indeed, clear that magic and any other superstitious notions are not a factual method of attaining the truth for being originally corruptive and harmful.

## 2.0 STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH

The concern of this part is to give a broader picture of the practical procedures for designing a systematic research.

- 1- Preliminary Feelings: A slight feeling of an inspiration, a sudden idea, may blink in the potential researcher's mind about a problem/question/issue or a phenomenon. That idea could be the starting point of a remarkable research. The idea is like a seedling; it needs careful handling and systematic fixing before it grows to the ripened stage. When a researcher starts feeling dissatisfaction with a set up of a commonly believed idea, or feels irrelevance with the components of a notion or identifies

loopholes in a presumably well-organized study, he may positively react, assuming that a problem lies somewhere with that particular case. And he probably goes on to properly understand its nature, or perhaps an Islamic ruling on it. This can be called as 'Methodological Doubt'. Hence, some big questions would start continuously alarming the researcher, such as, Why that? How about this? Who did it? Where and When? etc. This, of course, is the beginning always.

- 2- **Research Potentiality:** It is simply true that not everybody is mindedly ready to undertake the difficulties and aversions of research. But the potential researcher, at this stage, will think extensively about the easiest ways of hunting the pieces of threads in the Islamic and other books that could form an idea, which he would, eventually, sharpen down for his work. Because of his potentiality, the question at stake rings sonorously in his mind, where he would decide that the only way of calming it down is to let it mature in a way that the threads would be gathered up and organized systematically. The potential researcher feels an earnest need to re-think over it and hunt out some additional pieces of ideas from his experience. This will make the idea develop and acquire much scientific relevance in the researcher's mind. Thereupon, the qualities of goodness would appear in the selected topic, thus being *specific, flexible, deep and profound* <sup>14</sup>.



In the searching process, the potential researcher feels a strong determination to touch the untouched areas, which supposedly might have been given utmost consideration, since, likewise the old ones might also be in need to be reopened for reshuffled in a fresh way without being stuck in an old paradigm.

In fact, potentiality in any given subject is the prerequisite of successful research. Imam Ibn Hazm was apt in saying: “There is no worse calamity for science and for scholarship than those intruders who are foreign to them. They are ignorant and yet think they know; they ruin everything whilst convinced they are fixing it”<sup>15</sup>.

- 3- **Anticipated Value of the Research:** Any research must contain at least some values, which the researcher is intended to arrive at. Before taking time to develop a paper, the researcher has to measure and outline the anticipated benefits and returns that the research would have to the reader. This is absolutely mind work; it needs not be mentioned. If it were stated, it should be done modestly without bragging. And this is the right time to write an abstract to the paper. 'Abstract' is an executive summary of every crucial segment of the research, including its nature, the essential ideas and the goals/findings that the paper is going to touch upon or achieve. There is no prescribed length to an abstract but it is supposedly not to extend 250 words.

Writing a resourceful paper or book is, of course, one of the

major works, which are impliedly meant in the following hadith. The Prophet (phuh) said, "When a man dies, all his deeds come to an end except for three—an ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge or a righteous child who will pray for him"<sup>17</sup>.

- 4- Collecting Materials: This doesn't mean mere collecting ideas anyhow; rather, it means an extensive reading of the related literature in order to have an average idea about the depth of the topic. The true researcher would not spare any effort in such an exercise. He may even go beyond expectation to read some books many times, including those that have a slight relation with the area in order to have a broader picture of the topic. Francis Bacon said, "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed and some few to be chewed and digested". He also said, "Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man"<sup>18</sup>.

Most researchers now-a-days, rely heavily on some Arabic Search Softwares like "Ai-Shamels," "Ai-waqafiyah," etc. I am afraid, one may write a complete paper or book without reading a hardcopy. This is not good at all.

In whatsoever books, journals and the internet webs the researcher reads, he has to have a thorough understanding, with

certitude, of the actual meaning of the writer in order to avoid misunderstanding or quoting him out of context. It was wisely said, "Read with an open mind, reason without prejudice and react positively". The wise researcher seizes the opportunity whilst doing this variant reading to quote stunning words and paragraphs from the wise saying of the *Sahabah*, the Tabi'un and other erudite scholars in Islam studies and other branches of humanities, which may polish his writing. In addition to that, such readings help in getting some important "links"- as known in the research literature, which in the true picture the research may be padded, had it not been found. Hence, the need for accuracy in quotations and citations arises.

Conducting interviews with learned scholars in the field and having interactions with informants all are part and parcel of collecting materials, which deserves utmost care and must be run appropriately.

The above explanations present the researcher to, at least, two types of research in relation to collecting materials, 'Library Research' and 'Field Research'.

- 5- Tentative Outlining: A good research is under constant touching. But to get started, a rough sketch of the research-skeleton must be drawn first. Where the intended chapterization, sub-divisions and the general structure of the

research are to be clearly planned on a separate paper. It is commonly known that any given topic/research should have been divided into the "IBC" (Introduction, Body and Conclusion) format. It remains for the researcher to subdivide each one into units and portions that would significantly be easy in disseminating and clarifying the topic.

6- **Avoidance of Plagiarism** 19: The researcher has to carefully differentiate between the original ideas, facts, specific coinage etc. and common knowledge, which are widely known facts or ideas. In common knowledge, there is no need for citing the source while the original idea that comes out from others is their absolute right. Hence, it deserves to be strongly protected by attribution to its originator whenever cited. Plagiarism can be 'wholesale' or 'partial'. Wholesale plagiarism is claiming a large portion or the whole work of others. While partial is of three types:

- a- **Verbatim**: It is when some words or phrases are taken directly. It also occurs when paraphrasing a source.
- b- **Conceptual**: It is when some distinctive ideas and facts are taken and incorporated in one's work without attribution.
- c- **Structural**: It happens when presenting some ways of solving a problem or tackling an issue ~~of~~ without crediting the originator. Even if that methodological insight is used to a different case, it is the originator that should be credited. Sufyan Al thauri ( R ) said "Ascribing a point to

its originator is a sign of gratefulness and sincerity in seeking knowledge. While plagiarizing a point serves as an indicator to ingratitude and impurity of heart in seeking knowledge.”

- 7- Writing the Draft: Of course, a beginning or an amateur researcher would feel incapacitated to take a pen and tackle the selected topic. Nevertheless, he has to be courageous enough to overcome such research phobia. It is just a stupid idea; he should go ahead writing what he deems, at that moment, desirable and his best on that particular topic. In fact, it is not a moment of making good sentences with stylish and attractive language; rather, the focus at that time is to note down the whole idea; surely, the decorative part will instantly be inserted later. For scientific research is a self-correcting method; it would insinuate the researcher himself to effect any correction arising.

In the introduction, there is the need for fostering some specifications, which the whole research is built upon. These include mentioning the paper's genuine “Purposes” and “Limitation”, which denote the areas that the research would not go beyond. In this part also, the researcher has to review as many books, journals, Theses, Dissertations, conference proceedings, reports and all that he can lay his hands on pertaining to that topic, as possible. This is called “Literature

Review”. Its main purpose is to find out what aspect of the chosen area of the study has been written on, and what aspects have not been written on. It is a sort of justification that the current research is meaningful for bridging and fulfilling a huge gap that has been left unfilled by the previous researchers. The researcher should try as much as possible in the draft to insert footnotes wherever necessary to pin down the results of his research and justify his citations. There are, at least, four different ways followed for the arrangement of footnotes. It is the numbers that are either inserted at the foot of each page, or arranged consecutively throughout the paper, or arranged at the end of each chapter or the last that is to be inserted at the end of the whole paper. The last two are seldom called an “Endnote”.

The footnote is sometimes used for the explanation of an idea or a brief biography of an unpopular scholar or the *Takhrij* of a hadith etc. In this age of the availability of books and e-libraries, it is equally important for a writer in Islamic Studies and Arabic to do '*Takhrij*' of all the narrations he cited in the research. It is, of course, not good for a researcher to mention a prophetic-hadith or Ayah from the Qur'an and leave it loose without showing the source from which it is quoted.

In terms of documentation, there are many types of referencing style, but two are widely used, namely 'APA' and 'MLA'. The

“APA” stands for American Psychological Association, while “MLA” is an abbreviation of the Modern Language Association style. The former is used in the social sciences while the latter is used in the humanities. The researcher has to identify the field of research and the appropriate style expected of him to adopt. Some researchers wrongfully mix up the styles in one paper.

The format of the footnote in MLA style, when a work is cited for the first time, is as follows:<sup>20</sup>

- a- For books: Name/Names of the author (Surname or Popular name first). Full title of the book/paper (preferably in Italics), place of publication i.e. city: name of publishing company, date of publication, vol.(if applicable), page: p. or pages: pp.
  - b- For journals: Name, title, name of editor (translator, compiler, etc.), ~~name of a series~~ *Journal* and volume number if any.
  - c- For internet sources: Name, Title of Page, Title of Website in italics, last modified Month Day, Year, URL (Universal Resource Locator). <sup>21</sup>
  - d- For interview: name, place, subject of interview, date.
- Full documentation is necessary when citing a work for the first time, while a second citation should consist of only: the author's popular name, title of the work (shortened) and the page number, if applicable.

- 8- Proofreading: No piece of work is absolutely perfect except the Qur'an. For this purpose, proof reading is imperative for the removal of stupid mistakes and the deletion of inaccuracies in quotations, grammar, spelling and punctuations, footnotes, avoiding quoting "out of context", etc. The work has to undergo, at least, three different readings for it to gain the appreciation of others and readability. In all the times, a good dictionary must be at the researcher's elbow. Final crosschecking should be made for the actualization of sequence and the smooth flow of expression. But all such readings would not avert the painstaking researcher to revisit the work again after keeping it away out of his sight for some quite length of time.
- 9- Conclusion and Bibliography: In the concluding part of the paper, the researcher is not going to introduce new information, but to recapitulate the main points, findings and all that the paper has proposed and discussed, more importantly the researcher's original contribution. A good conclusion adds more advantage to the paper and manifests its value, as well as exposes the researcher's understanding of the material presented.

The other thing next to the conclusion of equal importance is bibliography. The arrangement the bibliography is similar to that of footnotes with additional three distinctive specifications: the Bibliography is arranged alphabetically and



no page numbers are needed; as well as mention must be made of serial numbers, asterisks or dashes. Each book stands only for it self in one paragraph.

10- Courtesy Reading: After finishing the paper and having read it over and over, it has also to be reviewed by some trusted learned people among the mentors, teachers or even friends of the researcher. They would definitely pinpoint weaknesses and strengths and even make comments that would add value to the analyzed idea. The researcher would realize that he/she is still in the domain of knowledge. Allah has said, "Above every possessor of knowledge is one more knowledgeable" (Q 12:76). The research is going to be available to the public; for this reason, the writer has to tender it before someone who would give explicit and plausible pieces of advice to enrich it. The researcher, hopefully, would take heed from this wise saying of A'isha, may Allah be pleased with her, praising the women of Madina, "How excellent are the women of the Ansar? Shyness does not prevent them from understanding the religion" <sup>22</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

The whole idea is to make a potential researcher read indiscriminately and ponder over what he has read positively in order to develop a good research. Research is certainly the backbone of scholarship. In Islam scholars are held in high esteem as the torch-bearers of prophetic

knowledge. The Prophet (pbuh) had said, “The scholars are the heirs of the prophets and the prophets do not leave any inheritance in the shape of dirhams and dinars, but they do leave knowledge as their legacy”<sup>23</sup>.

In general, the paper has highlighted on the concept of research and elaborated on its characteristics. The general purposes and broader researchable areas that can be regarded as the background of a majority of researches in humanity are explained, while the impediments that deter the researcher from conducting free and unbiased research are pointed out. The paper, at last, elaborates on the practical aspects of the research. The important tips for the production of a readable, qualitative and thought provoking paper are quietly outlined. A good researcher is always like a virus; his main goal is to infect the reader with his ideas!

## **APPENDIX I OF STUDIES**

By Francis Bacon

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning, by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience.

Crafty men condemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books, else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit: and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics subtle; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend. *Abeunt studia in mores* [Studies pass into and influence manners]. Nay, there is no stand or impediment in the wit but may be wrought out by fit studies; like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins; shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the Schoolmen; for they are *cymini sectores* [splitters of hairs]. If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases. So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Ahmad bn Hambal, *Al Zuhd*, Cairo: Dar Al Rayyan, 1408 AH, pp. 162-3
- <sup>2</sup> Muslim, *Sahih Muslim* (Nawawi's commentary), Beirut: Dar Ihya' Turath al Arabi, 1392 AH, (5/113)
- <sup>3</sup> Siyuti, *Al Ta'arif Bi Adab al Taalif*, Cairo: Maktabat al Turath al Islami, N.D., pp 19-20
- <sup>4</sup> Wimmer, R.G. and Joseph R. Dominick, *Mass Media Research: An introduction*, USA: Wadsworth cengage Learning, 9<sup>th</sup> ed., 2011, p. 9
- <sup>5</sup> Osuala, E.C., *Introduction to Research Methodology*, Onitsha: Africana-First Publishers Limited, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2005, p.1
- <sup>6</sup> Tayie, Samy , *Research Methods and Writing Research Proposals*, Cairo: Centre for Advancement of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Engineering Sciences, Faculty of Sciences Cairo University, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., 2005, pp. 2-3
- <sup>7</sup> Ibn Taimiyyah, *Majmu'u al Fatawa*, Saudia: Matabi' al Riyadh, 1381 H, vol.10 p.368
- <sup>8</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Al Taqrib Li Hadd Al Mantiq*, Beirut: Dar Al-Kotob Al-ilmiyah, 2003, p.16
- <sup>9</sup> Habib Siddiqui, *Seeking Knowledge an Imperative*, @ [http://www.islamawareness.net/Knowledge/knowledge\\_article0002.html](http://www.islamawareness.net/Knowledge/knowledge_article0002.html), 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2012
- <sup>10</sup> Shabeer Ahmad, *Development of Science and Technology In Islamic History*, Riyadh: Maktaba Darussalam, 2008, pp 65-67

- <sup>11</sup>Al Sakhawi, *Tilam bi Al Taubikh Li man damma al Taurikh*, Beirut: Mu'assat Al Risalah, 1<sup>st</sup> 1986, pp.43-74
- <sup>12</sup>Ghorab, Ahmad Abd Alhamid, *The Qur'anic Reasoning*, Dirasat Islamiyyah, Collection of Papers presented at the Departmental Seminar, Department of Islamic Studies, BUK, 1979/80-1980/81 session, pp.1-5
- <sup>13</sup> Quoted by Bukhari, *Sahih Al Bukhari*, Beirut: Dar Fikr, N.D., vol. 1, p.228
- <sup>14</sup>Akinnuoye, S., *Guide to the Writing of Long Essays and Term Papers*, Ibadan: Board Publication Limited, 1981, p. 28; Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. and Tight, Malcolm. *How to Research*, UK: Open University Press, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., 2010, pp.99-133
- <sup>15</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Al Akhlaq Wa al Siyar*, Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, 2009, p 91
- <sup>16</sup>Medubi, O.C., *Writing thr Abstract of Research Reports*, Oseni, Z.I., Alabi, V.A. and Medubi, O.C. Writing Up Research, Ilorin: The Faculty of Arts, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., 2011, pp 200-209.
- <sup>17</sup> Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, (11/85)
- <sup>18</sup>See the appendix I. It is a very acute essay that worth reading over and over.
- <sup>19</sup>Barbara Burg and others, *Writing with Internet Source*, UK: Harvard College, 2007, pp. 8-11; Murray, Rowena, *How to Write a Thesis*, UK: Open University Press, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2011, pp.135-144

<sup>0</sup>Akinnuoye, S., *Guide to the Writing of Long Essays*, pp. 64-5;  
Adeoye, A.A., *Documenting Research: The Modern  
Language Association (MLA) Style*, in Oseni, Z.I.,  
Alabi, V.A. and Medubi, O.C. *Writing Up Research*,  
Ilorin: The Faculty of Arts, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., 2011, pp.127-144

<sup>21</sup>How to Cite Footnotes in CMS,  
[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_8553986\\_cite-footnotes-cms.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_8553986_cite-footnotes-cms.html), browsed on 23th March, 2012

<sup>22</sup>Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, (2/12)

<sup>23</sup>Abu Dawud, *Al Sunan*, Beirut: Dar Al-Kitab Al-Arabi, N.D.,  
(3/354/3643)

<sup>24</sup>-Grammar and Composition, *o5\tjf Studies*, by Francis Bacon,  
<http://grammar.about.com/od/60essays/a/studiesessay.htm>, 22th March, 2012