

# Buddhist Research and Guidelines to Proceed in a Research

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## What is Research.

- “Investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts”.
- “The systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions”.

Research = Re – Search – Repeatedly searching

If you want to discover something not fathomable or not easily comprehend, you have to search it for repeatedly. That is the exact meaning of the word research.

## The Purpose of Research

- Research is a journey where we may discover what we anticipated through our investigation.
- We may have some hypothesis or imagination. we try to find out that hypothesis as a reality. We will try to say that it is not an imagination but it is a reality. That is a very purpose of a research.  
e.g. Satellite

## The Purpose of Research

- 2001: A Space Odyssey
- Film
- 2001: A Space Odyssey is a 1968 science fiction film produced and directed by Stanley Kubrick. The screenplay was co-written by Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke, and was partially inspired by Clarke's short story "The Sentinel".

## The Benefit of Research

- Through research very important and very valuable things have been produced by wise people in the world.
- e.g. Electricity, Telephone, Radio, T.V, Aeroplane etc., supply us enormous benefit
- Not only that some medicine which were found by some medical researchers are very useful for people.

## The Benefit of Researches

- On theoretical matters also more researches have been done. In Buddhism various Buddhist teachers were engaged in research activities. Therefore they were able to form philosophical theories which were created philosophical traditions such as Sarvastivada, Sautrantika, Madhyamaka and Yogacara. These are four major philosophical traditions in Buddhism. These traditions were emerged due to good researches.

## **Buddhist Research – Beginning**

### **Beginning of Buddhist Research**

- Buddhist Research has started with the 1<sup>st</sup> Buddhist council. Since the Buddha's Parinibbana this was the first attempt to keep the records of the Buddha's teachings in orderly form and divide into various categories and assigned the groups of disciples to keep and protect those parts given to them.

## **Buddhist Research -Beginning**

- Those who assigned to keep and protect those valuable parts of the teachings of the Buddha.
- They have studied properly and have been brushed up to bring it into pristine purity form and developed it avoiding the contradictory nature. This was not an easy task and their deliberations have been very successful. These divisions are remaining even today without changing after 2500 years.

## **Some say 1<sup>st</sup> Council was not conducted properly**

- But Rupert Gething in his Numata Lectures in 2008 said this Tipitaka compilation was done in a very unsystematic way. He used the words
- “inconsistency” “incoherence” to explain the unsystematic way the compilation has done in the 1<sup>st</sup> Buddhist Council. What our intention is to focus that the 1<sup>st</sup> Buddhist Council has done much of research to compile the scriptures and it has led the avenues for more future

## **1<sup>st</sup> Council was the beginning of Academic Research**

- Researches as well. One very important factor to show the nature of research that they have followed to compile these Nikāya volumes is that they did not followed the existing system
- Of nine divisions at that time such as: Sutta, Geyya, Veyyākaraṇa, Gāthā, Udāna, Itivuttaka, Jātaka, Abbhutadhamma, Vedalla
- This division of Nine Angas are very obscured

## **Made arrangements for protection of Scriptures**

- That is the very reason they had to find out a system more appropriate to make divisions and that has come as a result of a team research.
- These divisions were handed over to some groups for protection
- Digha Nikaya = Ananada Thera
- Majjhima Nikaya = Sariputta Thera
- Samyutta Nikaya = Mahakassapa Thera.

## **Bhanakas studied scriptures**

- Anguttara Nikaya = Anuruddha Thera.
- (DA.I.15)
- These were the Bhanakas and while they were protecting they studied properly and did research works. How these Bhanakas studied while they were reciting these tipitaka parts given to them have been explained in the Early History Buddhism in Ceylon by E.W. Adikaram.

## Writing biography of the Master

- As from the beginning the whole teachings of the Buddha has divided into two: Dhamma and Vinaya. When the Bhānakas engaged in research on those matters of Dhamma and Vinaya they wanted to collect the materials on the Biographical nature of the Master. While they were collecting the information with regard to the biography of the Buddha they discovered two Main terms. One is “Mahā” the other one is the

## Discovery of Valuable terms

- “Bodhisatta” The meaning of the term Mahā is “Great” “Large” “Excellent” “Only one of that kind”. They used this term “Mahā” in two ways . One refers to the Greatness as similar to names such as: Mahākamma Vibhanga, Mahāgesinga, Mahāsuññata, Mahānidāna. The other one refers to the Buddha and the Bodhisattva. Mahā’padāna, Mahāpurisa, Mahāsamana,

## Wanted to write the Biography in elaborated manner

- Mahā’bhīṇikkhamana, Mahāparinibbāna,
- Mahākaruṇā etc., Probably later on in this same sense the Term Mahāyāna has been formed to give these two kinds of meanings: Greatness and the Path to become a Buddha.
- In this manner faithful disciples wanted to write biography of the master and they wanted to write with more details with more elaborations and more elegance.

## Maha’padana Sutta

- The first attempt to compose a Biography of the Master would have been the Mahā’padāna sutta. Rhys Davids also agreed this is the first of such kind” in Buddhist literature its first appearance is in documents of the date of our
- Suttanta.” (Introduction to the Mahapadana Sutta- Dialogues of the Buddha. II)
- To form the biography of the Buddha some facts have been brought from other Nikaya

## Using information in the Majjhima Nikāya

- Volumes specially from Majjhima Nikāya. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (M.I.26 Sutta) explains the Siddhartha Bodhisattva’s vision of the life.
- That was: every human being is suffering from four major predicament of life, such as: Jāti (Birth), Jarā (Decaying), byādhi (Sickness),
- Marāṇa (death). When he realized these true factors of life he disgusted about the life

## Bodhisattva saw four pre-sings

- And he wanted to get away from home to homeless life and to become a hermit. This is of course the seen of the real nature of life through wisdom. This is not easily understood by everybody. For that in the Mahapadana Sutta a very nice story has been written with regard to the Vipassi bodhisttva’s vision of life. And written when the Vipassi Bodhisattva was going to the park he saw an old man, sick man,

## Renunciation

- Dead body and a monk. The remarkable feature was the Vipassi Bodhisattva has not seen them earlier. Ultimately when discussed with the charioteer that he came to know about the life and disgusted about the life. That was the way the Bodhisattva Vipassi disgusted about the life and engaged in renunciation.
- Not only that in the Sutta mentions how the the Bodhisattva's conception took place and

## Special qualities of the Bodhisattva

- how the bodhisattva spend the time in the mothers womb and finally was born. There are 16 qualities mentioned, **which are similarly occurring in the life of every bodhisattva**. It seems that after the qualities mentioned in the Digha Nikaya those same qualities have mentioned as special wonderful qualities of the Buddha in the Majjhima Nikaya with some developments.

## Acchariyabbhutadhamma

- Acchariyabbhutadhamma Sutta -123 sutta of Majjhima Nikaya (Discourse on Wonderful and Marvellous qualities) 19 qualities mentioned. In that case one can suggest Majjhima Nikaya collected the Biographical sketches of Bodhisattva and Dighanikaya using those Biographical sketches compiled a Biography of the Buddha. But they followed

## Every Bodhisattva is the same

- A very interesting method to write the Biography of the Siddhartha Gautama Buddha
- That means mentions these incidents are common to all the Bodhisattvas and include them in life of Vipassi Bodhisattva and used the words "Dhammata Esa" (This is the rule) for all the Bodhisattvas. In that way Siddhartha Bodhisattva also get those qualities. Those are the researches they followed.

## Buddhism followed many researches

- Buddhism has followed many researches from the very beginning. In fact the Buddha was the primary researcher to find the Path of Freedom (Vimutti Magga). Therefore Buddhism encourage to use research from the beginning. The Pali word for Research is 'Pariyesana'. Sanskrit 'Paryesana' English equivalent is given as "Search". In Sinhala, Sri Lankan language, the word 'Paryesana' is

## In Buddhism-Pali word for Research

- Used for academic research. Normally it is mentioned like 'Paryesana for Ph.D.' - 'M.A. Paryesana' - "He is engaged in a Paryesana these days." This Pali word Pariyesana is mentioned in the Majjhima Nikaya (Middle Length Saying) in the Discourse called "The Discourse of Noble Search" (Ariya Pariyesana Sutta). Sutta No.26.

### Beauty of the Research

- As it with everything, with Research also has a beauty. This research will lead the researcher to a unknown destination. In this travel of research he will discover very valuable results, which he has never thought of. When they discover these new theories it will lead them to enormous happiness. Some researchers will be thrilled with those discoveries and behave abnormally. Example:- Archimedes.

### How to Proceed with a Research

- Academic research are conducted to write a Thesis or a Dissertation. Thesis is for M.A. Degree or M.Phil. Degree. Dissertation is for Ph.D. Degree.
- One has to follow the University regulations to proceed in this type of research work to obtain those degrees of M.A. or M.Phil. - Ph.D.

### Application Procedure

- When you decide to do a research work for a degree you have to register in the necessary Department. For that you have to get an Application Form. Apart from your Name and Address you have to mention your pre-qualifications to show your eligibility to follow the particular research programme. Then you have to write your intended topic of research.

### Selecting Subject and the field

Topic is a Key factor of a research.

In order to select the topic one must first chose the subject for a research and select the field of that subject.

He must undergo thorough study in his field to select a topic.

When you thoroughly study your field of subject you may come across, some problems, some of the places where necessary to clarify more for readers to understand, some points need an analytical approach.

### Selecting a topic

- Some points need more proofs.
- Those problems or those points and those places will be the research topics.
- The topic should be precise one. The topic should indicate the clear idea of what is going on in that research.
- In simple way "When read the topic the aim of the research should be comprehended easily."

### Selecting a topic

- There are two ways of selecting a topic.
  1. Selecting a topic with the consultation of the supervisor.
  2. You as a researcher you can select the topic according to your own wishes.These both the ways have advantages and disadvantages both.

## Formulating a Topic

- Must not select a wider topic. Must select a limited topic.  
e.g.:- “Critical Evaluation of Pali Sutta Piataka”  
- Topic with a wider range.
- e.g.:- “Critical Evaluation of Brahmajala Sutta of Digha Nikaya” – Topic with a Limited range.

## Search for Sources

- In a research it is very important to find the Original sources. In Buddhist studies one must find original sources and then secondary sources also should use for more information.
- Sources are more important in a research. All the facts necessary to complete the research will be drawn from sources.
- There are some topics difficult to find sources.  
e.g.:- “Whether the Buddha was blamed by people, because mostly youngsters/ ordained”

## Must pay the attention to the time frame

- When engage in a research it is important to pay attention to the time factor.  
There is a time limit for a Research.  
For M.A. with Research. - 2 years. (Max.3)  
For Ph.D. - 3 years. (Max. 5 Years)  
Therefore it is very important to start with more prepared means must finalized in stipulated time.

## Synopsis writing

- When the candidate decides a Topic for a Research and obtained an application form, he must handover the completed application form with a Synopsis.
- When candidate complete the application form he must mention his/her present academic qualifications.
- Mention for what is the Degree that he is applying. For M.A. or Ph.D.

## What is a Synopsis?

- It is a comprehensive summary of your intended research project.
- It should be not longer than 4-5 pages.
- Normally this synopsis have to handover with the application at the beginning of 1st semester.
- In some Universities when you submit synopsis you must make a presentation also at least 10-15 minutes at the end of 1<sup>st</sup> semester.

## What should be included in the Synopsis

1. Title
2. Introduction to the title
3. Importance of this research
4. Literature review
5. Methodology
6. Breakdown of chapters
7. Conclusion
8. Bibliography
9. Appendix

### What should be included in the synopsis

1. Title
2. Introduction on the Title
3. The importance of this research and why you have selected this particular topic.
4. If there are any research done on the same topic or on the line of this topic those things must be mentioned and how you change your research from those works.

### What should be included in the Synopsis

#### 5. Methodology

How you are doing this research. After thorough Study of original Pali sources and collecting materials compare with sub commentary details and so on.

If it is a survey conducted in a particular area How the data collection, with a questionnaire and what are type of people you are going to meet and so on.

### What should be included in the Synopsis

6. Breakdown of chapters.
  - Each chapter should be given a title of the chapter and explain with two or three sentences what are the matters you intended to discuss in those chapters.
7. Conclusion.
8. Bibliography.
9. Appendix

### Registration

- Your application with the Synopsis if approved by the Academic Board after review the candidate will be virtually registered for the Research Degree Program.
- Then the Supervisor will be appointed by the Academic Board.
- Now the candidate is engaged in the Research according to the guidance given by the Supervisor.

### Proceed in a Research

- When the candidate engage in research work he has to get an appointment to meet the supervisor.
- You have to meet the supervisor regularly. That means when the candidate finished sub-section of one chapter or a chapter. He must hand over it to the supervisor for his advise.
- If you have a student card you have to get his signature each time you meet him.

### Footnotes or endnotes

- When you write something you must write foot notes or endnotes wherever necessary.
- If you are referring to a Books. There are two ways of giving reference. MLA type and APA Type.
  1. Bhattacharya, N.N. Buddhism in the History of Indian Ideas, Delhi. Manohar. Print

### Footnotes or Endnotes.

- Author's surname first, then his first name, then the Title of the Book, Place of the publication, Publisher and the year.
  - APA Type
  - Bhattacharya, N.N. (1993). Buddhism in the History of Indian Ideas. Delhi, Manohar
- Here the difference is the year of Publication comes just after the names and the place of publication mentions in shorter form e.g. New York = NY.

### What are the components of the Thesis

- Title Page
- Declaration
- Dedication
- Acknowledgement
- Content
- Abstract
- 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter – Introduction
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter – Literature Survey

### What are the components of the Thesis

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Chapter – Relevant to the Thesis
- 4<sup>th</sup> chapter - “ “ “ “
- 5<sup>th</sup> Chapter - “ “ “ “
- 6<sup>th</sup> Chapter - “ “ “ “
- 7<sup>th</sup> Chapter – Conclusion
- 8<sup>th</sup> Bibliography
- 8<sup>th</sup> Index

### What are the components of the Thesis

- **Title Page**
1. Must include the Title of the Thesis
  2. Name of the candidate and the Registration Number
  3. For what Degree this submission is done.
  4. Name of the Supervisor
  5. Name of the University

### What are the components of the Thesis

- **Declaration**  
Candidate and the supervisor both have to certify this Thesis is a research done by the candidate himself.
- **Abstract**  
This is the short summary of the study.  
Limit it to 150-200

### What are the components of the Thesis

- **Introduction**  
The comprehensive background to the study.  
You can explain the historical perspective for your study area.
- **Literature Review**  
Describe relevant previous studies in the field.



## What are the components of the Thesis

### ■ Conclusion

Describe what really you have been aiming at this Thesis and what kind of new points and new theories you could have discovered and how your findings are different from the previous other studies.

### ■ Bibliography

You must include all the books, Articles and Magazines you used in this research in the Bibliography.

## What are the components of the thesis

- You must not included the sources you did not read or sources that are not pertinent to your study in the bibliography.
- In the bibliography authors names should be written in Alphabetical order.
- Bibliography can be divided into sub-sections such as:- 1. Original Sources 2. Secondary Sources 3. Articles in the Journals 4. Book Reviews 5. Electronic References.

## What are the components of the Thesis

### ■ Index

When you do a Thesis on the subject of Buddhist Studies it is necessary to have index because of the mostly Pali and Sanskrit terms are involved.

### ■ Most important things to keep in Mind

- Efficient time management
- Avoid Plagiarism

## Writing tips

- Always use complete sentences.
- Avoid excessive use of personal pronouns such as I, me, according to my view point.
- Margins:  
Leave 01 inch from all sides except left side.  
Left side 01 ½ inch should leave for binding.
- Font Size:- 12pt  
(Times New Roman),  
Line Space: 2.