

السلام عليكم

peace be upon you

# Scientific Method for Engineers

« an introduction »



**ibn 'Abdullah**

September 2018

## ① Science & Engineering

- ▶ How They Differ but Intertwined

## ② Scientific Method

- ▶ A Very Short Historical Perspective & What It Entails
- ▶ Revised Hypothetico-Deductive Model
- ▶ Iterative in Nature
- ▶ Computational Method: The 20th Century Extension of Scientific Method
- ▶ Observation
- ▶ Hypothesis  $\implies$  Theory
- ▶ Experimental Results

## ③ Presenting a Scientific Thesis

- ▶ Representation of Technical Information
- ▶ Constructing Mathematical Function from Your Data
- ▶ Curves of Some Mathematical Functions
- ▶ Major Ingredients of a Scientific Thesis
- ▶ A Quick Look at ToC of a Typical Thesis

## ④ postscriptum

### Science

- Science is a systematic and logical approach to discovering how things in the universe work.
- The word “science” is derived from the Latin word **scientia**, which is knowledge based on *demonstrable* and *reproducible* data.
- Understanding *\*laws of nature* such as those involving physics, biology, chemistry and mathematics is what science is all about. Science makes us knowledgeable about our world and how it works.
- Science can only address natural phenomena (not *supernatural* phenomena—see *\*\*qudratullah*).

*\*LAWS OF NATURE:  
“SUNNATULLAH to Muslims—it refers to the way ALLAH rules and governs His creation’s raison d’être”  
\*\*QUDRATULLAH:  
“power of Allah”*

See <http://www.livescience.com/20896-science-scientific-method.html>  
<http://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-science-and-vs-engineering/>  
<http://www.indiana.edu/~ensiweb/nos.html>

### Engineering

- Engineering is the study of the existing body of scientific knowledge to make its use to create new designs and structures.
- Engineering makes use of science and mathematical principles to come up with better and more efficient structures and designs.
- According to **Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology** (ABET):  
“... *engineering is the profession in which a knowledge of the **mathematical** and **\*natural sciences** gained by study, experience, and practice is applied with judgement to develop ways to utilize, economically, the materials and forces of nature for the benefit of mankind.*”

**\*NATURAL SCIENCE:**

*“a branch of science that deals with the physical world, e.g. physics, chemistry, geology, and biology”*

See <http://www.livescience.com/20896-science-scientific-method.html>

<http://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-science-and-vs-engineering/>

# Scientific Method

## A Very Short Historical Perspective & What It Entails

- One thousand years ago, Ibn al-Haytham (965–1039, Iraq), argued the importance of forming questions and subsequently testing them, an approach which was later advocated by . . .
- . . . Galileo with the publication of *Discourses and Mathematical Demonstrations Relating to Two New Sciences* (1638).
- The current method is based on a *hypothetico-deductive* model formulated in the 20th century, although it has undergone significant revision since first proposed.
- Nowadays, when conducting research, scientists/engineers use the *scientific method* to collect measurable, *\*empirical evidence* in an experiment related to a *hypothesis* (often in the form of an if/then statement), the results aiming to support or contradict a *scientific theory*.

*\*EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE:  
“information acquired by observation or experimentation”*

See <http://www.livescience.com/21491-what-is-a-scientific-theory-definition-of-theory.html>

**Scientific Method** is a way of solving problems through:

- **Observation:** what is seen or measured.
- **Hypothesis:** possible explanation why things behave the way they do.  
Hypothesis is an EDUCATED, not random, guess.
- **Experiment:** designed to test hypothesis, may/will lead to new observations and the cycle goes on ...
- **Theory:** a hypothesis that has been investigated through experimental tests and observation and seems to be correct at explaining WHY things behave the way they do most of the time. Theory has predictive value(s) and if the prediction is wrong, the theory must be changed.  
Theory explains WHY a natural phenomenon occurs.
- **Law:** After a theory has been tested for an extended period of time using all possible methods of experimentation and observation and no exceptions have been found, then it is changed to a law, which summarizes a body of observations (often in the form of mathematical relationships).

Law tells us HOW it happens i.e. equation of how things change.

Scientific Method is iterative in nature.

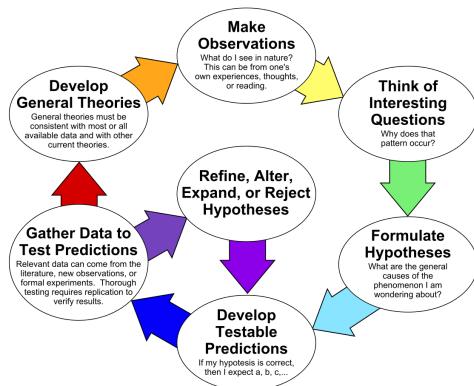


Figure 1: Scientific method.

See <http://www.tvgreen.com/apchem/apnotes.htm>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific\\_method](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_method)



- Thanks to the advent of digital computers in the mid-20th century, the traditional scientific method has now spawned the *computational method*.
- Traditional science, using the *scientific method*, advances when someone
  - 1 carefully observes something,
  - 2 develops a hypothesis,
  - 3 designs experiments to test the hypothesis, and
  - 4 formulate a theory.

When the experimental data supports the theory, mathematical models are developed that can be used to predict future outcomes.

- There are often drawbacks to traditional science. As mathematical models become more complex, the procedures required are increasingly time consuming, tedious, and error-prone. Modern computer systems usher in *computational method* which can perform algorithms quickly, tirelessly, and with minimal computational error.
- *Computational method* is thus an extension of the traditional *scientific method*; it is an intersection between science, math, and computing.

KEVIN BREWER & CATHY BAREISS (2016):  
*Concise Guide to Computing Foundations*  
Springer (ISBN 978-3-319-29952-5)

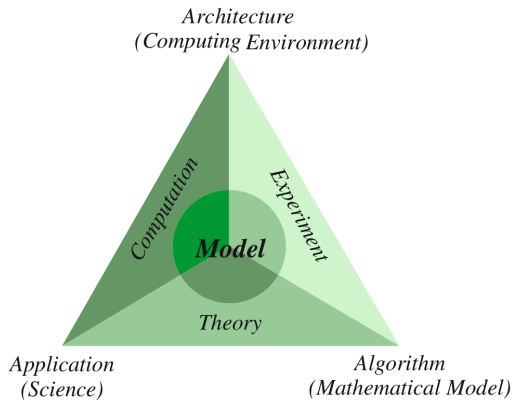


Figure 2: Overview of computational method.

Image from [www.shodor.org](http://www.shodor.org)

- Performance of a turbomachine is normally influenced by
  - ▶ control variables
  - ▶ geometric variables
  - ▶ fluid properties
- For hydraulic pump, for instance, we conject that the specific energy  $gH$ , efficiency  $\eta$  and power  $P$  as dependent variables

$$gH = f_1(Q, n, D, \rho, \mu, \frac{l_1}{D}, \dots) \quad (1a)$$

$$\eta = f_2(Q, n, D, \rho, \mu, \frac{l_1}{D}, \dots) \quad (1b)$$

$$P = f_3(Q, n, D, \rho, \mu, \frac{l_1}{D}, \dots) \quad (1c)$$

- Through *dimensional analysis* we may form *dimensionless groups*. Selecting  $\rho$ ,  $n$  and  $D$  as common factor in such exercise, we get

- ▶ *head coefficient*

$$\frac{gH}{n^2 D^2} = f_1 \left( \frac{Q}{nD^3}, \frac{\rho n D^2}{\mu}, \frac{l_1}{D}, \dots \right) \quad (2a)$$

- ▶ *efficiency*

$$\eta = f_2 \left( \frac{Q}{nD^3}, \frac{\rho n D^2}{\mu}, \frac{l_1}{D}, \dots \right) \quad (2b)$$

- ▶ *Newton number*,  $Ne$       \*\* (a.k.a. *power coefficient*,  $\hat{P}$ )

$$Ne = \frac{P}{\rho n^3 D^5} = f_3 \left( \frac{Q}{nD^3}, \frac{\rho n D^2}{\mu}, \frac{l_1}{D}, \dots \right) \quad (2c)$$

where

$$\frac{Q}{nD^3} \equiv \text{volumetric flow coefficient}; \quad \frac{\rho n D^2}{\mu} \equiv \text{Reynolds number, } Re$$

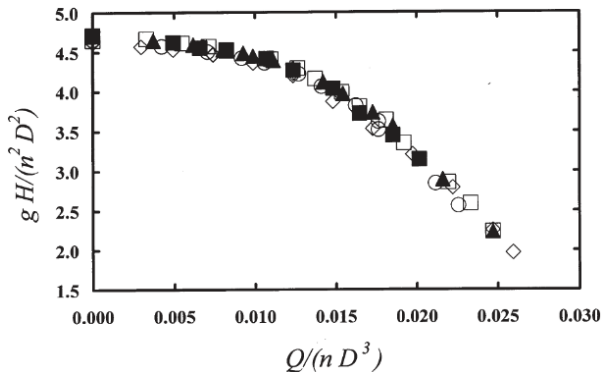


Figure 3: Dimensionless Performance Curve.

P. TAMAR (2005):

*Dimensionless Characteristics of Centrifugal Pump*

32nd International Conference of the Slovak Society of Chemical Engineering, 23–27 May 2005

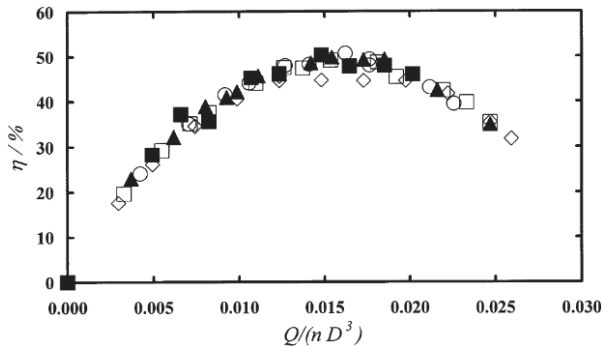


Figure 4: Dimensionless Performance Curve.

P. TAMAR (2005):

*Dimensionless Characteristics of Centrifugal Pump*

32nd International Conference of the Slovak Society of Chemical Engineering, 23–27 May 2005

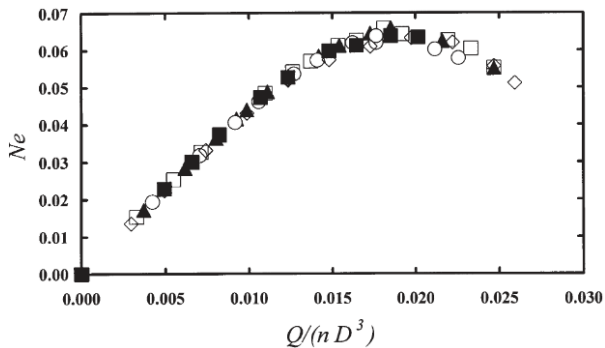


Figure 5: Dimensionless Performance Curve.

P. TAMAR (2005):

*Dimensionless Characteristics of Centrifugal Pump*

32nd International Conference of the Slovak Society of Chemical Engineering, 23–27 May 2005

- Question: What will be needed when collecting, recording, plotting, and interpreting technical data?
- **g3data session ...**
- Two pertinent issues in interpreting technical data
  - ① graphical *presentation* of scientific data, and
  - ② graphical *analysis* of plotted data
- quick, freehand plot of the data is produced to provide a visual first impression of the results; beyond this, spreadsheet software provides recording and plotting capability.
- Many forms of graphs and charts may be encountered. Which one to choose?
- **geany/SciDAVis/Octave (Matlab) session ...**

See <http://www.frantz.fi/software/g3data.php>  
<https://www.mathworks.com/>  
<http://scidavis.sourceforge.net/>



# Presenting a Scientific Thesis

## Constructing Mathematical Function from Your Data

- Curve fitting is needed once the data has been collected and recorded because it “... is the process of constructing a curve, or **(more importantly, constructing a) mathematical function**, that has the best fit to a series of data points, possibly subject to constraints.”

See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curve\\_fitting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curve_fitting)

- There are many fitting methods:

- ▶ Linear

- ★ point-to-point
- ★ linear regression:  $y = mx + c$

- ▶ Polynomial

- ★ quadratic:  $y = a + bx + cx^2$
- ★ cubic:  $y = a + bx + cx^2 + dx^3$
- ★ quartic:  $y = a + bx + cx^2 + dx^3 + ex^4$
- ★ quintic:  
 $y = a + bx + cx^2 + dx^3 + ex^4 + fx^5$

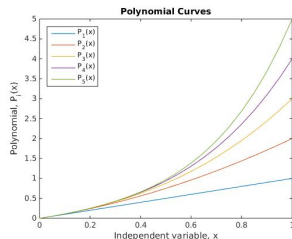


Figure 6: Polynomials.

... fitting methods:

▶ (Common) Nonlinear

- ★ basic exponential:  $y = a + be^{-cx}$
- ★ power curve:  $y = ax^b$

▶ (Less Common) Nonlinear

- ★ half-life exponential:  $y = a + \frac{b}{2^{x/c}}$
- ★ proportional rate growth or decrease:  $y = Y0 - \frac{V0}{K}(1 - e^{-Kx})$
- ★ Gaussian bell curve:  $y = \frac{ae^{-(x-b)^2/(2c)^2}}{L}$
- ★ sigmoid curve:  $y = \frac{L}{1 + e^{-k(x-x_0)}}$

▶ Splines

- ★ natural cubic spline
- ★ Akima spline
- ★ B-spline

▶ User defined

See <https://sourceforge.net/projects/scidavis/>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Logistic\\_function](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Logistic_function)

# Presenting a Scientific Thesis

## Curves of Some Mathematical Functions

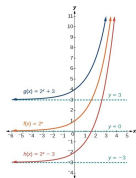


Figure 7: Basic exponential.

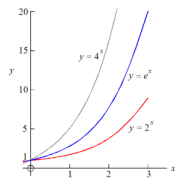


Figure 8: Power function.

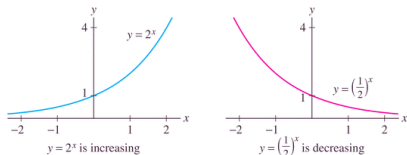


FIGURE 2

Figure 9: Half life exponential.

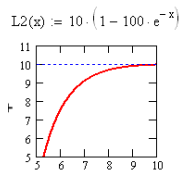


Figure 10: Proportional rate growth function.

# Presenting a Scientific Thesis

## Curves of Some Mathematical Functions

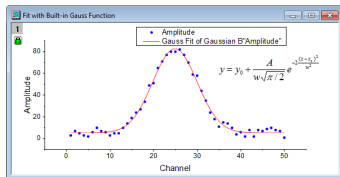


Figure 11: Gaussian bell curve.

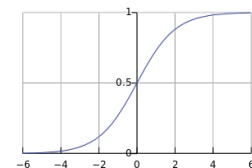


Figure 12: Sigmoid function.

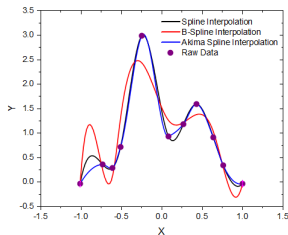


Figure 13: Splines.

### Major ingredients of a scientific thesis should include

- (a) **Fundamentals**—derive, prove, show mathematical model of theory/law
- (b) **Applications**—utilize theory/law from part (a) to solve problem in hand (e.g. M.Sc. or Ph.D. project)
- (c) **Quantitative/Deductive Reasonings**—(infuse ability to) draw inferences from evidence in parts (a) & (b)

- **Quantitative Reasoning (QR)** “... is the application of basic mathematics skills, such as algebra, to the analysis and interpretation of real-world quantitative information in the context of a discipline or an interdisciplinary problem to draw conclusions that are relevant. It is not just mathematics.”
- **Deductive Reasoning (DR)** is the process of reasoning from one or more statements to reach a logically certain conclusion. Aristotle’s classic example:
  - (S) All men are mortal.
  - (S) Socrates is a man.
  - (C) Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

See <https://www.aacu.org/peerreview/2014/summer/elrod>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deductive\\_reasoning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deductive_reasoning)

- A look at the table of contents of a standard thesis . . .

### THE APPLICATION OF HIGH INLET SWIRL ANGLES FOR BROAD OPERATING RANGE TURBOCHARGER COMPRESSOR

submitted by  
**Abu Hassan ABDULLAH**  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
of the University of Bath  
1996

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# Presenting a Scientific Thesis

## A Quick Look at ToC of a Typical Thesis

### Contents

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Summary   | iii      |
| List of Figures   | xv       |
| List of Tables  | xvi      |
| Preface   | xvii     |
| Acknowledgements  | xviii    |
| Foreword  | xix      |
| Nomenclature  | xx       |
| <b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>                                     | <b>1</b> |
| 1.1 Turbochargers   | 1        |
| 1.1.1 Turbocharger Compressor                             | 3        |
| 1.2 Objectives of the Investigation                       | 4        |
| <b>2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</b>                         | <b>8</b> |
| 2.1 Selection of Compressor Design Parameters             | 8        |
| 2.1.1 Performance and Losses                              | 9        |
| 2.1.2 Slip Factor   | 11       |
| 2.1.3 Non-dimensional Geometric Parameters                | 12       |
| 2.1.4 Selecting Discharge Absolute Flow Angle, $\alpha_2$ | 14       |
| 2.1.5 Internal Flow Analysis                              | 14       |
| 2.2 Stability of Compressor and Compressor System         | 15       |
| 2.3 Techniques to Suppress Surge                          | 16       |
| 2.3.1 Casing Treatments                                   | 17       |

iv

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| CONTENTS  | v         |
| 2.3.2 Backwept Impeller   | 17        |
| 2.3.3 Variable Geometry Diffusers                                 | 17        |
| 2.3.4 Prewhirl Mechanisms   | 21        |
| <b>3 TURBOCHARGER CONCEPTUAL DESIGN</b>                           | <b>43</b> |
| 3.1 Non-Dimensional Compressor Design                             | 43        |
| 3.1.1 Prewhirl  | 44        |
| 3.1.2 Compressor Impeller Discharge                               | 45        |
| 3.1.3 Compressor Impeller Inlet                                   | 46        |
| 3.1.4 Factors Affecting Design Point Selection                    | 46        |
| 3.2 Non-Dimensional Turbine Design                                | 48        |
| 3.2.1 Turbine-Compressor Matching                                 | 48        |
| 3.2.2 Turbine Rotor Inlet   | 50        |
| 3.2.3 Turbine Rotor Discharge                                     | 50        |
| 3.3 Application of Design Procedure                               | 51        |
| 3.3.1 Design Without Prewhirl                                     | 51        |
| 3.3.2 Design with Prewhirl  | 52        |
| <b>4 EXPERIMENTAL INVESTIGATION</b>                               | <b>69</b> |
| 4.1 Experimental Test Facility                                    | 69        |
| 4.1.1 Steady State Measurements                                   | 70        |
| 4.1.2 Transient Study of Stall and Surge Conditions               | 71        |
| 4.1.3 Design of Swirl Generators Applied With Impeller B          | 71        |
| 4.2 Tests on Impeller A   | 73        |
| 4.3 Tests on Impeller B   | 73        |
| 4.4 Data Reduction and Analysis                                   | 73        |
| 4.4.1 Overall Stage Performance                                   | 73        |
| 4.4.2 Derivation of Impeller Inlet and Discharge Velocity Vectors | 74        |
| 4.4.3 Analysis of Transient Signals                               | 74        |
| <b>5 EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS</b>                                     | <b>93</b> |
| 5.1 Preliminary Testing on Impeller A                             | 94        |
| 5.1.1 Assessment of Impeller Performance and Discharge Conditions | 94        |
| 5.2 Tests on Impeller B   | 95        |
| 5.2.1 Performance Characteristics                                 | 96        |

# Presenting a Scientific Thesis

## A Quick Look at ToC of a Typical Thesis

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| CONTENTS  | vi         |
| 5.2.2 Inlet Swirl Measurements                            | 99         |
| 5.2.3 Transient Study of Stall and Surge Conditions       | 102        |
| 5.2.4 Summary   | 105        |
| <b>6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>                  | <b>163</b> |
| 6.1 Impeller Design with Inlet Swirl                      | 163        |
| 6.2 Experimental Investigation                            | 164        |
| <b>A DEFINITIONS AND DERIVATIONS</b>                      | <b>166</b> |
| A.1 Perfect and Semi-Perfect Gas Properties at a Station  | 166        |
| A.2 Definition of Efficiencies                            | 167        |
| A.2.1 Nozzle Efficiency                                   | 167        |
| A.2.2 Diffuser Efficiency                                 | 167        |
| A.2.3 Compressor Stage Efficiencies                       | 167        |
| A.2.4 Turbine Stage Efficiencies                          | 168        |
| A.3 Centrifugal Compressor                                | 169        |
| A.3.1 Power Coefficients                                  | 169        |
| A.3.2 Non-Dimensional Velocities                          | 169        |
| A.3.3 Flow Angles   | 170        |
| A.3.4 Non-Dimensional Mass Flow Rate                      | 171        |
| A.3.4.1 Non-Dimensional Mass Flow Rate at Impeller Inlet  | 171        |
| A.3.4.2 Solving the Non-Dimensional Mass Flow Rate        | 172        |
| A.3.5 Slip Factor and Derivation of Blade Angle           | 173        |
| A.3.6 Specific Speed                                      | 173        |
| A.3.7 Impeller Diffusion Factor                           | 174        |
| A.4 Radial Turbine  | 176        |
| A.4.1 Power Coefficients                                  | 176        |
| A.4.2 Non-Dimensional Velocities                          | 176        |
| A.4.3 Flow Angles   | 177        |
| A.4.4 Non-Dimensional Mass Flow Rate                      | 178        |
| A.4.4.1 Non-Dimensional Mass Flow Rate at Rotor Discharge | 178        |
| A.4.4.2 Solving the Non-Dimensional Mass Flow Rate        | 180        |
| <b>B INTERACTIVE TURBOCHARGER DESIGN</b>                  | <b>187</b> |
| B.1 Design Sequence                                       | 187        |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| CONTENTS   | vii        |
| B.2 Design of Centrifugal Compressor   | 189        |
| B.2.1 Impeller Discharge Conditions  | 189        |
| B.2.1.1 Contours of $\alpha_2$ on $M_2$ versus $M_{2,C}$ Graph                                     | 189        |
| B.2.1.2 Contours of $\beta_2$ on $M_2$ versus $M_{2,C}$ Graph                                      | 189        |
| B.2.2 Impeller Inlet Conditions – Shroud   | 190        |
| B.2.2.1 Contours of $r_{1,2}/r_2$ on $M_{2,rad}$ versus $M_2$ Graph                                | 190        |
| B.2.2.2 Contours of $\theta_{1,2}$ on $M_{2,rad}$ versus $M_2$ Graph                               | 191        |
| B.2.2.3 Contours of $\beta_{1,2}$ on $M_{2,rad}$ versus $M_2$ Graph                                | 191        |
| B.2.2.4 Tracking the Relative Ratio, $W_{1,2}/W_2$ , on $M_{2,rad}$ versus $M_2$ Graph             | 192        |
| B.2.2.5 Tracking the Specific Speed on $M_{2,rad}$ versus $M_2$ Graph                              | 192        |
| B.2.2.6 Tracking the Diffusion Factor and Discharge Blade Height on $M_{2,rad}$ versus $M_2$ Graph | 192        |
| B.3 Design of Radial Inflow Turbine  | 194        |
| B.3.1 Turbine Rotor Inlet Conditions   | 194        |
| B.3.1.1 Contours of $\alpha_1$ on $M_1$ versus $M_{1,T}$ Graph                                     | 194        |
| B.3.1.2 Contours of $\beta_1$ on $M_1$ versus $M_{1,T}$ Graph                                      | 194        |
| B.3.2 Turbine Rotor Discharge Conditions   | 195        |
| B.3.2.1 Contours of $r_2/r_1$ on $M_{2,rad}$ versus $M_2$ Graph                                    | 195        |
| B.3.2.2 Contours of $\theta_2$ on $M_{2,rad}$ versus $M_2$ Graph                                   | 196        |
| B.3.2.3 Contours of $\beta_2$ on $M_{2,rad}$ versus $M_2$ Graph                                    | 196        |
| <b>C REDUCTION OF EXPERIMENTAL DATA</b>  | <b>203</b> |
| C.1 Pressure and Temperature   | 203        |
| C.2 Computation of Mass Flow Rate  | 204        |
| C.2.1 Mass flow rate measurement using nozzle  | 204        |
| C.3 Overall Stage Performance  | 205        |
| C.3.1 Compressor Stage Entry Conditions  | 205        |
| C.3.2 Compressor stage discharge   | 206        |
| C.3.3 Stage performance parameters   | 206        |
| C.3.4 Impeller Inlet Conditions  | 207        |
| C.3.5 Impeller exit conditions   | 208        |
| <b>D VARIATIONS OF DERIVED PARAMETERS</b>  | <b>213</b> |
| <b>Bibliography</b>  | <b>238</b> |



- It was narrated that Anas bin Malik said: The Messenger of Allah said

*Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim.*

SUNAN IBN E MAJAH, BOOK OF SUNNAH, HADITH # 224

- Imam al-Ghazali in his masterpiece, **IHYA 'ULUM AD-DIN**, cited *Khalil bin Ahmad al-Bisri* who put man & his knowledge into four groups, and advised accordingly

- ▶ **RAJUL[UN] LA YADRI WALA YADRI ANNAHU LA YADRI**  
“Someone who does not know and he does not know that he does not know”, leave him.
- ▶ **RAJUL[UN] LA YADRI WA YADRI ANNAHU LA YADRI**  
“Someone who does not know and he knows that he does not know”, teach him.
- ▶ **RAJUL[UN] YADRI WALA YADRI ANNAHU YADRI**  
“Someone who knows but he does not know that he knows”, wake him.
- ▶ **RAJUL[UN] YADRI WA YADRI ANNAHU YADRI**  
“Someone who knows and he knows that he knows”, follow him.

- It was narrated that Abu Hurairah said: The Messenger of Allah said:

*Whoever acquires knowledge by which the pleasure of Allah is sought, but he only acquires it for the purpose of worldly gain, will not smell the fragrance of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection.*

SUNAN IBN E MAJAH, BOOK OF SUNNAH, HADITH # 252

- ... and I end my presentation with two supplications

رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

my Lord! increase me in knowledge

(TAA-HAA (20):114)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ عِلْمًا نَافِعًا

O Allah! We ask You for knowledge that is of benefit

(IBN MAJAH)