

Academic Writing Referencing Styles: The Challenges Of An Islamic Law Researcher

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ABSTRACT

The University of Ilorin Law Referencing Style (UNILARS) is adopted for postgraduate researchers as guide for referencing in academic writings. This also include Islamic law researches. The guide has been in place for more than a decade. Student researchers have always struggled to comply with the obvious requirement of the guidelines, despite its various discrepancies and ambiguous provisions. In the case of Islamic Law researchers, it became more perplexed adopting UNILARS due to the wide vacuum existing in the guidelines regarding Islamic law literature and their unique features in the manner of its presentation; writing names, dates, title of literature, correct manner of referencing Qur'ān and Hadith etc. Although, the identified *lacuna* is not peculiar to UNILARS alone, various other referencing styles also fall short of the recognition. Unity of style in referencing Islamic law literature could however not be achieved, despite adopting a referencing style. These have one way or the other, contribute to the challenges of adopting UNILARS and some other referencing styles in academic writings. This research therefore identified some of the challenges embedded in adopting UNILARS, through doctrinal cum non-doctrinal but qualitative research methodology. The research found and highlights some of the uniqueness of Islamic Law literature which are paramount for consideration in styling any referencing guide. A model referencing style is therefore proposed for Islamic law researchers named: University of Ilorin Shari'ah Law Referencing Style (UNISLARS) to curb the challenges.

ARTICLE INFORMATION

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Referencing Style,
Islamic Law
Researchers,
Shari'ah literature.

1. Introduction

Academics have various methods and styles of acknowledging literature sources in writings. This is one of the important aspect of a research, which demonstrates the quality of a research work. From Shari'ah perspective, referencing, which may also be in form of *tah'qiq*, *ta'liq*, *tash'ih* or *shar'u* etc. add to the potency of a research work. The current trend, is for each

academic settings, in term of faculty, department, research institute or journal outlet to either adopt a particular referencing style, among the popular ones or design her own for researchers. In the case of Islamic Law Department, Faculty of Law, University of Ilorin, the applicable referencing style for Postgraduate students is, the University of Ilorin Law Referencing Style, UNILARS for short.

In adopting the above style, survey conducted reveals that, recurrent challenges are encountered by students which remained unresolved. The appropriate method of citing Islamic Law literature were said not to be properly addressed in UNILARS. This is despite the Research Methodology classes - especially one dedicated for Islamic Law Research - undergone by postgraduate students before the commencement of research. Styles adopted by students on the appropriate citation methods conflict sometimes, as different standards were required by lecturers, depending on their view as regard UNILARS requirement. Islamic law students are sometimes found wanting of due compliance with UNILARS, due to the ambiguity that exist in it. This resulted in an unwarranted situation. Student researchers are therefore confused on the exact standard to adopt in their research.

To resolve the conundrum, this research become apt to investigate the major areas of the challenges, with a view to determine the appropriate measure to curb the difficulties by proposing a model citation standard for Islamic law research in the department, that suit the peculiarities of research literature in Islamic Law. This discourse is segmented into seven parts. It commences with this introduction, followed by the exposition of the relevance of referencing in academic writings. Part three adumbrate the various referencing styles and methods, then, a review of UNILARS is done in the fourth part of this paper. An explanation of the challenges of Islamic law researchers were given in the fifth part, while a proposed model of Referencing Style for Islamic Law department is set out in part six before the paper concludes in the last part.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Relevance of Referencing in Academic Writings

It is a known fact that, undertaking an academic research entails sourcing for information, data, and fact etc. in order to solve a known or emerging problem (Taiwo, 2011).

Starting from the point of discovering the existing problem or gap in the academic arena,

certain literature must have been read one way or the other. The information, fact and data that are relied on in laying background and presenting one's view must have been gotten from a known source. It is part of the ethic of a good research that, those sources must be acknowledged in one's research (Taiwo, 2011).

Acknowledging the sources in this regard mean that, regard must be given to the owner/originator of the information or conclusion by simply mentioning or referring to the author and the literature. This is done by referencing the specific information while citing the source of the information (Abugu, 2022).

Referencing in an academic writing is an important phenomenon upon which the integrity of the author or researcher of a book or article depends (Grix, 2001). The quality of a research is also found in the reality of literature it relies on and relate with (Taiwo, 2011). Failure to reference facts represented in an academic writing may suggest that the research is not worthwhile. It may cause aspersion in the ability of the researcher, either as to his academic potency to conduct a worthwhile research or his honesty in relating with other people's work (Santini, 2018).

Improper referencing and deliberate neglect to acknowledge academic source is a serious academic offence. It amount to dishonesty and fraudulent act in the academic arena, properly described as plagiarism (Rivkin, 2020). It is also an offence punishable under the Copy Right Act (Copyright Act, 2023). To avoid this however, citation and referencing is employed to acknowledge the source of the work. This is done in two ways: the idea may be placed in quotations as directly presented in the original source, with specific reference to the owner; or by paraphrasing the idea in a preferred sentence(s) and acknowledging where the idea originated (Taiwo, 2011).

There are different method of carrying out source acknowledgment in academic research. The next section detailed some of the method and styles in legal research, which is being adopted for Islamic research and those that are specifically engineered for Islamic law research.

2.2. Referencing Methods and Styles in Academic Writings

There are several referencing methods and styles in the academic arena, depending on

the area of one's research. The most popular methods in its broad classification is the 'in text' and 'footnote' method. In the 'in text' referencing, the name of the author, the year of publication and page number is only provided in the main text of the writing while full detail of the literature is given at the end of the writing as End Notes or Bibliography (Jamiu Ayinla-Edun, 2023). The footnote referencing on the other hand, gives the reader immediate details of the referred literature at the foot of the page of writing with a corresponding number inserted as a superscript in front of the information (Imam, 2021). Sometimes, bibliography or references may also be given at the end of the writing when footnote referencing is used (Abugu, 2022).

Depending on any of the above two types of referencing styles, various academic institutions and journal outlets usually prescribe their preferred mode of citation, either by adopting the existing established references style or creating a new style for the institution. Generally in Nigeria, it is common for Universities and Journal outlets to demand from authors to comply with either National Association of Law Teachers (NALT) Uniform Citation Style- Guide, or Oxford University Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA) (Faculty of Law University of Oxford, 2022) or sometimes give options to the author to choose between the two. In rare occasion, Legal Journal outlets may demand for Chicago Manual Citation Style, Harvard Referencing Style or American Psychological Association (APA) Referencing Style (Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 2020).

International Journal Outlets outside Nigeria usually design their preferred referencing style for their journal (Qatar University, 2024). The popular ones that are being used here in Nigeria are specifically designed by certain institution or the other. For example, OSCOLA is for Oxford University England; (Nolan & Meredith, 2012). Chicago Style was designed by the University of Chicago Press since 1906 (Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 2020) while Harvard Referencing Style originated from Harvard University Law School, Cambridge Others like, Journal of College of Sharia and Islamic Studies Qatar, *Jurnal Syariah* (Universiti Malaya, 2024) and Journal of Shariah Law

Research, Kuala Lumpur (Sarcheshmehpour et al., 2022), etc. have their unique referencing styles which were provided on their websites/portal as part of the information and guidelines for intending authors to their journals.

One unique feature in all these special referencing styles is, the recognition of the disparity in the manner and styles of writing books, journal and periodicals etc. and the acceptance of the unique appearance of the mode of writings in Islamic Law. Some of these Journal outlets provides specifically for the required style of referencing Islamic literatures in recognition of its unique nature and also specify the transliteration model for Arabic Letters (Library of Congress, 2011). This goes a long way to ameliorate the difficulty one may have in referencing Islamic Law material, while trying to comply with certain referencing style.

Understanding the above analysis may seem blurred until specific examples are given. Some literature in Islamic law goes beyond the original author(s) work; *Tah qīq*, *Ta'liq*, *Taṣ ḥ īḥ*, *Shar'u* or *tafsīr* (Muhammad, Mu'jam Lugah, 1996) etc. have been done subsequently on some of the original work, which will sometimes make the content differs from the original text. This is apart from the differences associated with the manner of book presentation by different publishers of the same literature (Fahrudin Ali Sabri, 2012) and the unfettered privilege in Islamic domain to sometimes repeat writing similar work, others have written on, especially with annotation, summary, explanation or referencing etc. Hence, recognising the inimitable features of Islamic Law literature by providing specific style of referencing, underline the uniqueness of Islamic law research and the utmost relevance of the need for a distinctive referencing style.

In this regard, the University of Ilorin Law Referencing Style (UNILARS) applies to both the Islamic and other legal research in the faculty of law. The details of the content is explained in the next segment of this work.

3. Methodology

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. The University of Ilorin Referencing Style (UNILARAS): a. Review

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It is not uncommon for universities to have and adopt separate referencing style for students and researchers in the school. In fact, the new trend now, is for each segment of the school, in term of faculty or department to adopt a distinct referencing style for students and researchers. The Faculty of Law, University of Ilorin is not an exception in this regard. The University of Ilorin Law Referencing Style (known as 'UNILARS') is adopted for students in their research sine 2010 (Abdulrazzaq, 2023). The UNILARS provides guide on how thesis and dissertation should be written in general. It also specifically set out how literature are referenced in all postgraduate academics writing (University of Ilorin Law, 2010).

Specifically at page 6, UNILARS provides as follows:

"Footnotes:

- a) Surname first to be followed by initials of author i.e. Akanbi M.M,
- b) automatic, font 10 and must follow the style in SAMPLE J
- c) First time citation to be in full
- d) Subsequent citations to be titles and pages only
- e) 1.5 line spacing and justify"

The simple analysis made from the above is that, the citation of any reference must be cited by writing the surname first and to be followed by the initial of the author. The citation, which must be in the footnote must be in automatic 10 font of 1.5 line spacing and justified. While the first citation is required to be in full, subsequent citation is to have titles and pages only. The full style is then provided in SAMPLE J.

Upon perusal of Sample J in the document, it is found that, it has a total of 19 Citation of References when counted one after the other, because it is not numbered. 3 out of the 19 has more that one reference. The types of the literature cited therein includes: Textbooks, Chapters in Book, Articles (both Hard Copy Journal Articles and Online Articles), Thesis, Laws and Cases.

The first 2 references by the content, is a Textbook and Journal respectively. It however appear to be a subsequent citation as it does not provides full detail of the literature cited. The first citation of the two references is however not

contained in Sample J. The third references referred to 3 different literatures. The first of it is a Ph.D Thesis in full citation, followed by a textbook and later by a Journal literature. Since all the three citations are full as it appeared, it is taken as sample for full citation of Thesis, Textbook and Journal Article from UNILARS.

Further, reference number 4-8 are clear as to how an Act and Cases are cited. It is also clear from note 7 and 11 that, the Latin word '*Ibid*' is used when subsequent citation follows the immediate reference. Footnote 9 is another textbook reference while note 10 is a Chapter in Book reference appearing for the first time in full citation. This is followed by '*Ibid*' which indicates that note 11 has the same reference as 10 above. However, footnote 12 has the same reference as in footnote 10, although the citation was not in full in note 12. Footnote 12 also includes a reference of an Article from the internet.

Footnote 13 and 14 from Sample J showcase how Articles on the internet can be cited for the first time and subsequently in a discourse. Footnote 15 reproduced the reference of Chapter in a Book in note 10 and 12 respectively. Note 16 is another Article reference which is not in full citation while note 17 is a subsequent citation of Thesis in note 3. Note 18 and 19 are apparently subsequent citation of Textbooks. The first one does not have authors name in it while the last has a name of the author with '*et al*'. Sample J is reproduced in this work as Figure I.

The above analysis becomes necessary, to showcase the difficulty of University of Ilorin, Faculty of Law Students, in adopting UNILARS for referencing in their research generally and the challenges associated with Islamic law students' researcher specifically. This is also owing to the fact that, there are obvious discrepancies in the instructions given by UNILARS and lecturers guidance towards the instruction differs, depending on their understanding of the document. For example, some lecturer/supervisors will insist that, '*Ibid*' is not part of UNILARS and must not be used. Others will demand that, author name should be written starting with surname and followed by initial

(e.g. Imam A.A), rather than the other way (A. A. Imam). Again, when authors are more than two, the use of "et al" becomes necessary to some lecturers while some insist on it when the authors are above three (students of Islamic Law, 2023). All these occur because of the large vacuum existing in UNILARS and the obvious inconsistencies.

Apparently, from Sample J of UNILARS, it is not clear, whether authors name should be written in line with the guideline given at page 6, as it appeared mostly in Sample J or to be written in either of the style in the second and third citation of Reference number 3. That is, "W. W. Park" or "Horacio A. Grigera Naon". The same difficulty is associated with subsequent citation of references that immediately follows the previous one. Is "*ibid*" the most appropriate or half citation that have name of author, title of the literature and page number or just title of the literature and page number only. Lastly, it is not explicit when "*et al*" is used. Is it for more than two authors or more and whether initials of the first author is not required when in use.

Further, there are vacuum that was not filled in UNILARS. It does not provides for how conference, workshops and seminar papers are referenced in footnote. This also includes reports and other official documents among others. From the point of view of Islamic law researchers, the vacuum is more wider to the extent that the peculiarities of Shari'ah literatures are not taken into consideration at all. In fact, no single Shari'ah literature is exemplified in Sample J. Several challenges were therefore encountered due to this vacuum that led student vulnerable in their research. The challenges peculiar to Islamic Law Students/Researchers is discussed in details in the next part.

4.2. Adopting UNILARS Referencing Style: The Challenges of Islamic Law Students/Researchers.

According to the survey conducted among the postgraduate students of Islamic law, 58.3% of the Respondent encountered one problem or the other regarding adoption of UNILARS in his/her research. Although, a total of 75% of the Respondent believed that, UNILARS requires reversion, 25% however

disagreed and held that, it has catered for Referencing Style to a greater extent. Complications encountered by student researcher include: difficulty in writing authors name of Arabic literatures, proper methods of citing Arabic books which have been edited or translated, how to properly write the date of publication, the transliteration format of the Arabic words and the proper method of citing the Qur'an and Hadith

The drawback highlighted above underscore the unique nature of Islamic law literature. The Qur'an and Hadith have their distinct nature that cannot be equated with other literature. The content of the Qur'an no matter the publisher or year of publication remained the same (Kementerian Agama, 2007).

The proper method of referring to it in literature though differs. In some instance, chapter and verse number (Qur'an 43:2) (Universiti Malaya, 2024) suffices while other prefer the use of the chapter name and the verse (*Surah Al-Fajr* (89): 7) (Atbuosh, 2024). Where translation of a Qur'an provision is quoted or referred to, full information of the translator and the publisher may be required. This also includes where the *tafsir* of Qur'an is cited (Abi al Fida' Ismail bin Umar Ibnu Katsir al Qurasyi al Dimasyqi, 2005). From another wicket, Hadith provisions also have their distinct features. Similar Hadith may be reported differently in words or meaning by different reporter. Again, there are several books of Hadith compilations (Al-Bukhari et al., 2002), the arrangement of which are not similar. To allow reader of any literature trace the source, specific information of where such Hadith is gotten must be given. In doing this, the authors name, name of the book (including edition and volume), date of publication, publisher, specific chapter in the book, the Hadith number and page number are the relevant information that must be provided. This does not have place in UNILARS.

Further, literature written in Arabic usually have lengthy authors name. Surnames are usually more than one. Sometimes, name of town and city are included as part of name. It is also not out of place to see *kunyah* or *laqab* (Abu al-Husain ahmad bin Faris bin Zakaria bin Muhammad bin Habib ar-Razi al-Lughawi, 1999) as part of the name. In fact, some authors are more popular with their nickname or town name

than their real name. For example, the author of *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid wa-Nihāyat al-Muqtaṣ id*, Ibn Rushd Al-Qurtabi, was popular with the name Ibn Rushd Al-Hafid. His full name as written on the book is: "Al-Imam al-Qādhi Abi-walid, Muhammad bn Ahmad bn Muhammad bn Ahmad bn Rushd al-Qurtabi, al-Andalusi. He is popular with: Ibn Rushd al-Hafid". Considering the style in UNILARS, the appropriate name to be adopted as surname and how to go about the initials became an ordeal.

Some literature have also been edited. The editorial works differs from one another. Some work are explanation of the earlier text, while retaining the exact content of the original work (Ṣalih, 2001). The editorial work done on some text, only relates to providing reference to the expressions in the text (Shakir, n.d.), while in some other occasion, the expression are qualified, specified, extended etc. as the case may be. In citing any of this kind of work, it may be required to include the name of the editor alongside the author of original text to identify the book properly. This is because, the same book may have been edited by another person, which content may also be differ. This, was neither provided under UNILARS nor was there anything that could be adopted to fulfil the task.

Further, dates of publications on some of the Arabic literature are written in *Hijra* calculations. Can a researcher adopt the date as written or should the equivalent in Arabic numerals be provided. This is another dilemma of student researcher. This is apart from the missing link of the appropriate transliteration model for Arabic words.

The above identified *lacuna* is not restricted to UNILARS alone. None of the popular citation styles, especially from the western world, neither have consideration for shari'ah literature nor pay attention to its uniqueness. The unwelcome situation became more compounded by the adoption of these various referencing styles by some Shari'ah Journal and faculty without any specific guidelines towards shari'ah literature. With the exception of some view, those that made additional guidelines for shari'ah after the adoption of a particular referencing style, only spell out the the transliteration model.

To wriggle it of this quagmire, it becomes desirable for all shari'ah Faculty, department,

academy and journal outlets etc. to specifically design referencing style that will at all time suit the demand of Shari'ah literature. A standard can be borrowed -with improvement- from Journal of Shari'ah Law, *Jurnal Syariah* or Journal of College of Islamic Law and Shari'ah and others on the same pedestal in this regard. This is to specifically give special regard to the uniqueness of Shari'ah research and literature as it deserve, create separate standard for the citation and recognition of Shari'ah literature and also ease the problem of tracing literature cited in Shari'ah research work.

It is also worrisome that, as popular as UNILARS has become among postgraduate students of University of Ilorin, none of the department in the Faculty of Law adopts it as a referencing style for her journal. This explains why instructions and guidelines from lecturers on UNILARS are not unanimous. The adoption of the referencing style is relegated to faculty and student concern. Although, it is understood that, referencing styles are just guidelines, it is more preferable that, such guidelines covers the field and leave no vacuum. Hardly would the style improve -even after a decade of adoption- if the stance towards it continue on the same stride.

It is on this note that, this paper propose a new model Referencing Style for Islamic Law Department of Faculty of Law, University of Ilorin and the department journal, Unilorin Shari'ah Law Journal with the name: University of Ilorin Shari'ah Law Referencing Style (UNISLARS). The next section gives detail of the proposal.

4.3. Proposed Unilorin Shari'ah Law Referencing Style (UNISLARS)

This research proposed that, the University of Ilorin Shari'ah Law Referencing Style (UNISLARS) adopt footnote and Bibliography Style of Referencing. The footnote is to provide minimum information of every literature cited, including specific page(s) and paragraph(s) (where applicable) of the point referenced while the Bibliography shall provide the full information of the literature excluding the specific page of reference.

The immediate reference to any literature shall be provided in automatic footnote of 10

font, Times New Roman, justify and 1.5 line spacing, complying with the following guidelines:

1. Author's Surname should be written first, to be followed by initials of author i.e. Abdullah M.A,
 - a. Where the authors are more than one, use "and" in between the authors name and exclude the "comma" after the last initials of the first author i.e. Abdullah M.A and Sa'id S.I,
 - b. *et al* should be used when the authors are more than two. "Comma" will be used to separate the First and second author's name. Then, "*et al*" should be written in italics. The "comma" after the second author's initial is then excused. i.e. Imam A.A, Murtadha A.O. *et al*
 - c. Popular name of author is to be adopted for Arabic text authors (especially where it is difficult to identify the surname) except where only the name of the author(s) feature in the literature i.e. Ibn Rushd Al-Hafidh or Ibn Qoyyim or Al-Jawhari or Khallaf A, or Asobuniy M.A,
 - d. In the case of more than two authors in an Arabic text, the rule in (b) above should be adopted. i.e. Ibn Rush al-Hafidh, al-Jawhari *et al* or Khallaf A, Asoubuniy M.A *et al*
 - e. The same format of writing name is adopted for editors and translators in which case:
 - i. (ed.) or (eds.) shall be written in front of the name of editor(s)
 - ii. (trans) is written in front of translators name
 - f. Where the literature to be cited is an explanation (*shar'u*) of another literature in any form:
 - i. The name of the elucidator is adopted in place of the author where reference is taken from the explanation of the later literature.
 - ii. The author(s) of the former literature may also be adopted with specific mention of the later literature.
 - g. A translated literature that has adopted another name shall be cited as a book of itself. Reference may however be made to the original text where the researcher is aware of same.
2. The title of all literature follows the authors name in the following format:
 - a. Titles of all literature is to be written verbatim, in full as written on the literature to be cited. i.e. *Ṣaḥīḥ Fiqhu as-Sunnah wa-Adillatuhu wa-taodīḥ Madhahib al-Ahimmah* not *Ṣaḥīḥ Fiqhu as-Sunnah*
 - b. Books title, the title of Chapters in Book and Thesis should be written in italics i.e. *The Practice of Muslim Family Law in Nigeria*
 - c. Journal Articles (both hard copy and online), Title of Articles of Chapters in Book and all other literature title should be written with a single quotation i.e. 'Islamic Financial Services: The Way Forward for the Regulatory Authorities'
 - d. The same format in C above is adopted for Newspaper, Magazine, Reports etc.
3. For Chapters in Book, title of the Article is to be written first, after which the name of editor(s) is written followed by the title of the Book. i.e. Murtadha A.O and Imam A. A, 'Hybrid Contract and it's Legality in the Eyes of Shari'ah' in Sa'id M.I and Muhammad K.G, (eds) *Legal Paradigm in Nigeria: A New Direction in the Study of Law and Practice*
4. After the Authors name and Title, the year of the publication, the edition, Volume, issue, number as the case may be follows in the following sequence:
 - a. For Books, Chapters in Book and other literature of the likes, the Year of publication is provided inside bracket, followed by the edition and then volume as be applicable, using comma to separate them i.e. (2023, 2nd ed., Vol. 3,)
 - b. For Articles and literature of the likes (except Chapters in Book), only the year is written in bracket followed by volume or edition to be written without bracket, then issue and/or number in bracket (and to alternate the bracket as may be required), whichever is applicable. i.e. (2023) 4 (3).....; (2023) 4.....; (2023) 4 (2) 1.....

- c. Where the applicable literature uses date (especially Magazine, Newspaper etc), only the date on the literature (whether in full or not) should be written as: 21 October 2023 or July 2023 or Jan-Apr 2023
- d. Where the date is written in Arabic, the transliteration of the date as it appears on the literature is to be adopted. "h" is then added to indicate that it is *hijri* date. Where the literature mentioned the date in English, the English is adopted. eg. ١٤٤١ محرم – ربيع الأول or رمضان ١٤٤٣، رجب ١٤٤١ is written as *Rajab 1441h, Ramadā 1443h or muḥaram - robī'u al-awwal 1344h*
5. The name of Publisher and place of publication shall follows in the case of Book and Chapters in Book while title of journal follows in case of an article.
 - a. The name of Publisher is adopted as written on the literature followed by the place of publication (State or Town only where it is popular. If not, State/Town and Country is written) separated with "comma". Both to be inside the bracket before same is closed. i.e. (..... *Dār Taofikiyyah, Qohirah*) or (.....*Ere-oja Publishers, Ilofa, Kwara-Nigeria*)
 - b. For Articles, name of journal is written full in italics. i.e. *Unilorin Shari'ah Law Journal*.
6. Page number of the specific referenced literature is then written in Arabic numeral. Where the reference cut across numerous pages, "comma" is used to separate the different pages while "hyphen" is used if the reference continue in pages. i.e. 20. or 25, 27, 75. or 106-109.
7. Where literature are gotten from internet source only, the website and the last time of access is to be indicated. i.e. <<https://ilorinjournalofhumanities.leg alissues.apr.%2342pdf>> accessed last 23 October 2023. If it is also available in hard copy, the website may be excused.
8. For all Arabic writings and references, standard transliteration adopted by the Library of Congress is to be adopted for all Arabic words. The pdf is available online. See <https://www.loc.gov/catfir/cpsa//romanisation/arabic.pdf>
9. All transliterated words are to be in italics except where such word has formed part of English usage.
10. Qur'ān is referred to (whether it is quoted in the text or simply referred to) by mentioning the *Surah* in its transliteration (in italics) with the chapter and verse number. i.e. *Al-Baqarah* 2:282.
 - a. Where particular reference is made to the translation of the Qur'ān or *tafsir*, the specific literature is then cited with the inclusion of the *Surah*, the chapter number and verse at the end of the citation.
 - b. If the Qur'ān cited does not have the same chronological arrangement with the traditional and popular one (for example, the Qur'ān where "*Bismillah* ..." is counted and numbered as the first verse in a chapter of the Qur'ān), indicate the specific one cited.
11. For Hadīth reference, the above rules shall be applicable. However, the Chapter under reference (*Bāb al-Buyū'*) and the Hadīth number is to be mentioned before the page number.
12. Reference without authors name, title, publisher or date should be indicated with: n.n., n.t., n.p. and n.d. respectively.
13. In subsequent citation of any literature:
 - a. *ibid* is used if the referencing follows the initial one immediately.
 - b. If the first referencing have more than one literature, the authors name and the title of the literature is written.
 - c. Where the reference does not follow immediately, the authors name and the titles of the literature only is written.
 - d. If the page of reference is different from the earlier citation, the new page number is added.
 - e. In the case of Qur'ān reference, the verse, chapter and verse number is repeated.
 - f. The Chapter of the Hadīth and page number shall also be included in subsequent citation.

Bibliography is included at the end of the discourse. The same format mentioned above is

adopted. Although, name of author(s) is written in full as it appears on the literature. Page number, chapter and date of access are excused.

5. Conclusion

There is no doubt, UNILARS leaves a large vacuum for shari'ah students in their research. For over a decades however, research conducted based on UNILARS have continuously been accepted by the school authority and certificate awarded in that regard. This is not to say that, the vacuum vanished, students effort and lecturers guidance have at all time been the saving grace. The *lacuna* therefore continue to deepen more as students continue to venture more into the research arena from the department of Islamic law. Discrepancies in the method of compliance with UNILARS became more noticeable and lecturers guidance, could no longer solve the quagmire, because of the perceived conflict of opinion. The situation, which is unwelcomed among the student gives strength to this research.

The challenges identified by students, in this research includes: failure of UNILARS to prescribe the proper modes of Arabic literature in terms of name, title and dates. How Qur'ān and hadīth are properly referenced and the appropriate transliteration method acceptable in this regard. The proposed UNISLARS has potentials to aid of students and researchers alike in wading off the quagmire associated with UNILARS as a referencing style for Islamic Law literatures. The proposed referencing style is recommended for adoption by the Department of Islamic Law, University of Ilorin-Nigeria and the department journal known as Unilorin Shari 'ah Journal.

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