Decorative motif is a special branch of fine arts which has great aesthetic expression power. Different decorative motifs were used in different times as per personal whims of artists and the prevailing conditions. They have many elements like geometric patterns, floral motifs or simple patterns of Islamic art. But geometric patterns dominate because of their meaningful expression and outward beauty. Icons and motifs reveal sensuous, formal or stylistic values of metaphysics, religion and existing spiritual experiences. These motifs and forms are very popular in paintings of Islamic period and are developed considerably well by Muslim artists. This does not mean that their works were based on religious themes. These paintings displayed muslim cultures and were subject to rules and spirit of Islam.

Here we are discussing the bases of Islamic art because Islam stands for peace and visualizes truth in an easy and balancing form in life. It encourages spread of culture and art within bounds of decency and morality. In the early days of Islam there were no figures or picture in mosques, schools and residential houses and this type of arts was not encouraged. However the passage of time and growth of cultural integration led to use of decorated wall paintings and portraits of natural scenes and illumination of manuscripts and textiles. Later on Islamic art became varied and rich specially become of contacts with Christians and decoration of their churches. With the spread of Muslim rule in Egypt, Syria, Persia and India new designs and ideas were developed by Muslim artists in paintings and figurative arts. Floral motifs,
geometric patterns and illuminations of books, textiles and buildings became very popular and received patrange from affluent sections of the society. Muslim artists depicted concepts of harmony, unity amidst diversity, principles of Egyptian civilization.

The Muslim artists of India have used patterns based on principles of mathematics to explain certain philosophical problems or to add to the grandeour and beauty of architecture. Similarly they have used floral motifs and decorative designs to depict natural scenes, philosophical situations and religious themes. Indian flowers no doubt occupy a place of distinction in influencing Islamic paintings and calligraphy but still they have retained their Arab and Persian traits and philosophical and metaphysical backgrounds of my research “geometrical and floral motifs in Indian Islamic paintings” and divided it into four chapters to discuss and clarify these concepts in details captioned as under:

I. Clear vision of Islamic paintings

II. Islamic painting in Indian subcontinent

III. Concept of Geometrical patterns in Indian Islamic paintings

IV. Concept of floral patterns in Indian Islamic paintings

In the first chapter I have given a brief introduction of principles and teachings of Islam because they form the base of all Islamic arts and painting is a very interesting part of Islamic art. The story begins when Muhammad (PBH) was born in a noble Qureshi Family of Arabia. He declared that human beings should believe in one God. His followers are called Muslims. Islam tells about
manifold powers and qualities of Allah, specially creation of universe, human beings. animals, trees, mountains and all worldly things, His blessings, mercy and control on everything. Islam maintains that life has to be spent with care, balance and peace. The teaching of Tauhid and other moral values prescribed by Islam are amply reflected in various Islamic civilizations specially in activities of art and culture and spirit of Islam is fully visible. Art is mirror of a culture and forms its world view. Before advent of Islam in Arabia only few arts flourished like poetry. But under Islamic rule contacts with other developed countries and their culture helped in the evolvement of a rich Islamic culture having several types of arts. These Islamic arts emerged and developed along with the rise and advance of Islam. However Islamic art is in favour of symbolic representation and does not aim at portrayal of Supreme Reality in any form object or model as prevalent in other reigns. Tauhid is the essence of Islam and as per this principle of unity void is the only goal and soul of Islamic art.

It has been clearly stated that Islam does not permit any figural art i.e. statue, picture or sketch of any living being. In seventh century Arab muslims came in contact with alien cultures possessing artistic traditions and features in countries like Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, North Africa and Spain. After rise of Islam Arabs came in contact with new cultures and were influenced by their development. Many artists of pictorial art continued their profession after embracing Islam. No doubt muslims made very rich contributions in the field of architecture. The decorative art in which Muslim artists used geometry and astronomy in making new patterns gave inspiring and naval messages in the
buildings constructed in that period. Muslim artists discharged their duties well by depicting historical events and social activities of their times through their paintings and rendered great service to their culture. The beautiful backgrounds and attractive patterns have given them a dignified identity of their own in the field of fine arts.

In the second chapter deals with the advent of Islamic painting in India. When Muslim civilization came to India, it was fully advanced in literature, architecture and other fine arts. 'The sultanate period monarchs and Mughal emperors patronized many arts and they tried to expand and develop them. Among the many innovations introduced by the Mughals in the art of painting perhaps the most important one was the idea of Karkhana or workshop. In these workshops diverse type of artists worked together under one roof and thereby fostered better communication among them. The purpose and social environment prevailing in the imperial Mughal Karkhanas was to expose minds and eyes of artists to fresh and lively experiences. Indian Muslim paintings throughout the country had common feature of beautiful decoration. Decorative patterns of immense beauty were very skillfully displayed in backgrounds of these paintings. Indian Muslim artists were faithful followers of Persian artists and copied their works but still they displayed some artistic deviations which transformed from father to son. We find that through floral designs and various patterns, Indian Muslim painters have retained fine balance and quality of impressive decoration in their paintings.
In the third chapter the concept of geometrical patterns as a comprehensive addition to the beauty and elegance of paintings has been explained amply. In Islamic tradition Geometry is being used as a communicative symbol from the very beginning. Finally it became a part and parcel of Islamic culture and all over muslim countries it was used as a message to display art. With the development of painting Geometry found an important place in it and after crossing borders of cultural exchange reached India. This glorious art displayed an abstract or intellectual beauty based on depth of knowledge compiled with delicate imagination and faithful expression of the motif. Islamic artists have used Geometry as a symbol to give their personal expressions about God and His eternal powers. They used these patterns to express religious point of view about universal order in a very logical manner.

Floral motifs have been discussed in the fourth chapter. As Islam lays emphasis on beauty, these motifs play important and common role in Islamic paintings. Muslim artists have used this Islamic aesthetic symbol in abstract form and made their art interesting and beautiful. Their products impress the viewers with their peaceful expression. Indian Islamic Paintings are full of fragrance of decorative elements. The muslim artists were faithful followers of Islamic culture and maintained the underlying spirit of Islam at every stage. In other words they used Islamic painting to reflect the beauty and splendour of their culture and used symbolic forms and elements with perfect aesthetic sense. 'Muslim artists have used floral patterns to denote deep and highly mystic meanings or explanations. However certain pieces of Islamic art appear
to the ambiguous. Generally speaking they look beautiful and at the same time represent Islamic spirit or philosophy in a comprehensive aesthetic sense. These flowers are messengers of peace and point out the most real and eternal place paradise after the final decay of this mortal world.

This extraordinary consistency of style and artistic preferences in the Islamic world helped to build a congenial, social consistency in social and cultural order. All Muslims hold the same basic beliefs, all are familiar with the customary religious observations, and this strong and uniform sense of identity and continuity led towards a high degree of social, and artistic, conservatism. As a result, many forms and artistic concepts remained unchanged over the last many centuries in the Muslim world.