

Acknowledgements

I express my deepest gratitude to the women who narrated their life experiences and made this study possible with their interest and trust in me. I deeply appreciate cooperation and support of the medical practitioners at the surrogacy clinic in Anand for permitting a prolonged and unrestricted access to the participants and to the setting where this study was conducted. I sincerely thank the surrogacy practitioners in Ahmedabad and Anand for their informative and open discussions with me which set the stage for this study.

I convey my heartfelt thanks to Prof. Shagufa Kapadia, my mentor and guide, for her invaluable contributions to this study and to my professional growth. Her academic rigour and exceptional professionalism have left deep impressions on my mind and I am indebted to her for all my learnings that no amount of books or readings could have facilitated. I deeply appreciate her for providing me opportunities to present this research at national and international research forums. Her nurturing support and guidance made this doctoral journey a joyful experience. I look forward to opportunities for further professional collaboration with her.

Along the way, many helped to make it the best study it could be. I am grateful to the team of academicians at the department for providing feedback and peer review through the regular structured research seminars during the course of this study. I appreciate the efforts and time Prof. Bhavana Mehta, Faculty of Social Work and Ms Urvi Shaha, Population Research Centre at the M.S. University of Baroda invested in the content validation of the interview guide. I thank Ms Urvi Shaha for her discussion and feedback which facilitated ethical conduct of this research. Special thanks go to the Women's Studies Research Centre team for supporting preliminary interactions with the surrogacy practitioners across Gujarat. I am grateful to Pooja Venkatesh, for helping me establish intercoder reliability at two junctures in this study. I admire Madhura Naik for helping me develop infographics for this study and patiently making all the revisions required.

I have been fortunate to have a strong support network of friends who kept me motivated through the ups and downs of the doctoral studies. I thank Meghna Kushwaha for taking pride in my tiniest achievements. Her support in all walks of my

life is unmatched. I also thank her for editing preliminary draft of the review and helping me polish various presentations. Apurva Pandya, a trained counsellor, closely reviewed initial draft of the proposed counselling model for the surrogacy practice and made significant contribution towards its finalisation. I thank him for being available whenever I sought help and for consistent guidance and motivation. I appreciate Jigisha Gala, for resolving my queries, encouraging me to tap professional opportunities, and for being my contact person at the department when I was off-campus. I thank Tripti Kathuria for finding and sharing relevant readings and all the logistic support she offered. I thank Swati Joshi, Harpreet Kaur, Sonal Shaha, Pooja Sanghavi and all my postgraduate classmates for their fond enquires about my research progress. A special thank you goes to Jigisha Gala, Sonal Shah, Nandini Laddu, Aakash Gupta, Payal and Mahima, Mahesh Ronghe, and Tejal Tailor for providing me several homes away from my home during the course of this study.

I am grateful to my mentor and supervisor Ms. Vrishali Pispati, CEO, Mumbai Mobile Creches (MMC) for pushing me to stretch my comfort zone and for providing critical feedback on the initial drafts of the methods and results chapters. I thank her for accommodating my days off from work for writing this thesis. I thank all my colleagues at MMC for graciously sharing my work responsibilities during my absence from work. A special thanks to Shakuntala Tai, Shaila Tai, Seema Tai, Frahinsa, Vrushali and Shiny for taking keen interest in knowing my research.

My deepest gratitude to my parents Geeta and Pradeep, in-laws Rajashree and Ravindra, Bhavmit, Ameya, Amruta, Bhavin, Anju, Saish, Sukhada and all my beloved childhood friends; without them no achievement can bring me joy. I can't thank Bhavmit enough for ensuring that my professional journey is devoid of personal hurdles.

I sincerely thank the University Grants Commission for providing me Research Fellowship in the Sciences for meritorious students under the Basic Scientific Research (BSR) scheme for this study.