

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe much to the strange fate which brought me to Gujarat all the way from Kerala for my doctoral research. During my doctoral journey, so much has happened and I have changed much, learned much, and gained a handful of good friends and experiences.

I consider it a blessing to have been acquainted with Prof Deeptha Achar who encouraged me and inspired me with her trust in people and humility in her knowledge. Without her sincere efforts and support despite various hurdles during the epidemic driven last three years, this thesis would not have seen fruition. I am deeply indebted to my PhD colleagues, in particular, Bhavesh, Lizy, Kesha and Pratiksha for making it possible for me to manage my research alongside my work. To the coursework gang - Bhavesh, Lizy, Onvi, and Somnath - I'm thankful for your companionship and stimulating personalities. Bhavesh has been an inevitable part of this journey, with his love for systematic and prudent approach in even the smallest of matters, and his penchant for giving 'reminders.' I fondly remember the scooter rides with Lizy ma'am to the FCT and the Balvant Parekh Library in the scorching Baroda summer. To the coolest of persons I have ever met, Onvi, I owe thanks for her hospitality and friendship.

I must also thank the HoD Prof Hitesh D Raviya, my research advisors Prof Madhurita Choudhary and Prof Sachin Ketkar, other faculty members, and the administrative and non-teaching staff of the department, Ms Pallaviben G Patel and Mr Rameshbhai S Vaghela. I thank the KG hostel warden, Geeta ma'am for all her help, Harsha for our early morning walks, travels, and cooking experiments, Sreedha for ARR's *Encore*, the food, the stay and the films, and Saji aunty for everything. I am grateful to MSU's Computer Science coursework instructors for introducing me to the invaluable typesetting tool \LaTeX . I'm thankful to Dr Rahul Kamble, EFLU for offering the MA course on childhood and for sharing valuable suggestions and resources. I thank my colleagues at St Gregorios College, Kottarakara, for being accommodating and considerate.

Finally, without the following people in my life, I wouldn't have made it thus far: the wonderful Samma and Gotham, indifferent Linchi, my Ajo, and my indomitable parents.