ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people and institutions have been provided immense support during the pursuit of my Ph.D. research. I would like to acknowledge their contributions. First and foremost, I would like to thank my guide and inspiration, Dr. Maitree Vaidya for her constant guidance, advice and support. Without her guidance, I would have been unable to analyze and understand the data collected. Her constant support and encouragement motivated me to undertake such a research work and made possible its timely completion. I would also like to thank the Head of the Department, Prof. Aruna Awasthi for being my teacher ever since I began my Graduation studies in 2010. Prof. Aruna Awasthi provided me with opportunities by appointing me as Project Fellow and Research Assistant. I am grateful to her for meticulous and sincere support which helped me to reach my full potential in academic and research.

I am extremely grateful to all my teachers, Prof. A. B. Saxena, Prof. Vibhuti Parikh, Dr. Dilip Kataria and retired Prof. Rajkumar Hans and Dr. Iftikhar A. Khan, who never hesitated to extend their valuable advice. From the department, I am also thankful to non-teaching staff (Mr. Nilesh Dave, Mr. Rameshbhai, and Mr. Naresh). I also thank all staff members of Arts Faculty of The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Gujarat.

My special thanks are also due to all the libraries and repositories I visited, especially Hansa Mehta Library (Baroda), Baroda State Archives (Baroda), Gujarat State Archives (Gandhinagar), Central Library (Baroda), Library of Gujarat Vidyapith, Library of Gujarat Nai Talim Sangh - Ahmedabad and Libraries of various Buniyadi Ashram Schools. I would also extend my gratitude to the online libraries, archives or repositories (www.mk gandhi.sarvodaya.org, www.mkgandhi.org, www.gandhiinsitute.org, www.gandhiashramsevagram.org, https://archive.org, https://www.jstor.org, https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in, https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in etc.).

I cannot forget the resource persons for me in this research. They are Mr. Bhavanbhai and Mr. Jesingbhai (from, Nai Talim Sangh, Gujarat Vidyapeeth-Ahmedabad). It seems to be very less to thank them but I am really grateful for their help.

I am extremely grateful to Miss Kangna Kumari, for her constant guidance, support and encouragement that enabled me to complete my thesis on time. I expressed my sincere gratitude to my friends and colleagues Dr. Hridesh Mourya, Ms. Sonam Soni, and Ms. Garima Singh for their assistance during my research and for always being there for me. They gave my life a true direction and because of their inspiration I am filled with positive energy. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Mr. Pradip Vegad, Mr. Lalji Jinjala, Mr. Kaushik Suvagya, Mr. Mayur Dhamecha, Ms. Jagruti Gujjar, Mr. Bharat Sagar, Mr. Tanumoy Ghosh, Ms. Priyanka Singh, Mr. Darshan, Ms. Somali, Ms. Priyakshi Hazarika, Mr. Rajesh Nandania, Ms. Manisha Vala, Mr. Bhimji Vaghela, Mr. Ramesh Dabhi and Mr. Manish Rathod and for their support and encouragement.

I have been really lucky to have a wonderful group of friends and colleagues at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara. Their support has been a crucial part of all my accomplishments. I thank all of them.

I would especially like to thank my younger brother Mr. Pravin Diyora and my sisters Ashmitaben & Alpa, who have always been very helpful and supportive in my life. I cannot put into words my gratitude to my parents Shri Tulashibhai Diyora and Smt. Basuben Diyora for having extended all kinds of support throughout this period of this painstaking research. Finally, I am thankful to Mr. Kalubhai Dabhi and other family members and many friends, whose support and encouragement

in so many ways have helped me reach my destination. If I have left anyone out, I sincerely apologize, but know that my thanks go out to you as well.

Bharat Tulashibhai Diyora