ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Submission of my thesis puts a cessation to a struggling phase of an altogether different learning process and reminds me about the beautiful quote *"Perseverance is the key to success"*. In my long quest of some scientific answers, I was immensely been supported by many people in their unique ways for which this became a lifetime experience. When I sit back and reminisce about those people, I would like to extend my gratefulness towards them and acknowledge them from the bottom of my heart.

At this moment of accomplishment, it is an immense pleasure to express my deep sense of gratitude and indebtedness to my research supervisor, **Dr. Laxmipriya P. Nampoothiri**. This work would not have been possible without her unlimited support, constant guidance, constructive criticism, unbelievable patience and great knowledge that helped me a lot throughout the course of this investigation. It was you as a woman, who understood me and supported me through my and my family's ups and downs. It was your sternness, care and your trust in me that has brought me to this stage. I wish to imbibe at least some of the many qualities that she owns- be it punctuality, balancing personal and professional life or multitasking or being an excellent teacher.

The words fail me to express my sincere gratitude to **Dr. Padamnabhi S. Nagar**. Sir has been like a co-guide to me (unofficially) and has supported me immensely in phytochemical analysis by his keen interest, patience and constant encouragement during course of my work on this thesis. Of course, it is my life time achievement to work with him.

I offer my sincerest appreciation to the Vice Chancellor, **Prof. Parimal H. Vyas** of The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda and **Prof. Haribhai Kataria**, Dean Faculty of Science, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda for providing necessary infrastructure and resources to accomplish my research work.

I am extremely grateful to **Prof. C. Ratna Prabha**, Head, and **Prof. Sarita Gupta**, former Head, Department of Biochemistry, MSUB, for providing me with the infrastructural and instrumental facilities to carry out my research work and for being constantly supportive and encouraging. They have also been kind enough to provide me with opportunities that helped in developing my academic skills.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Doctoral Research Committee members- **Prof. Sarita Gupta, Prof. G. Naresh Kumar, Dr. Padamnabhi S. Nagar and Dr. Laxmipriya Nampoothiri** for their valuable suggestions, constructive criticism and encouragement. Their constant feedback has helped in shaping up my Ph.D. work. I would also like to acknowledge the past and present faculties of the department, **Prof. R. Begum, Prof. Pushpa Robin, Prof. J. K. Pohnerkar, Prof. Rajesh Singh, Dr. S. R. Acharya, Dr. Ravi Vijayvargia, Dr. Devesh Suthar and Dr. Sanjeev K Upadhyay** for their kind support and encouragement throughout my PhD tenure.

I would like to convey my gratitude to **Prof. G. Naresh Kumar, Prof. Rajesh Singh, Dr. Ravi Vijayvargia** and **Dr. Padamnabhi S. Nagar** and their research scholars for the easy access to their laboratories and instruments whenever required.

I specially thank all the clerical staff of the department, Mr. Manish Chauhan, Mr. Ramesh Nare, Mr. Shailesh Raval, Mrs. Axita Thappa, Mrs. Bhartiben Patel, Mr. Anil Mane, Mr. Balvant Gohil, Mr. Sandip Bandal and Mr. Ramesh Kamle, for their constant help and co-operation in the hassle-free accomplishment of administrative work.

A major part of my thesis work involves animal experimentation. **Rameshhai**, **Vijaybhai**, and **Narayanbhai** have always made my work easy by helping me in rat and mouse handling and maintenance. Thank you so much for a humane touch to the animal house and making it a lively place. I will sincerely miss working in the animal house the most.

I further express my gratitude to **Prof. Sarita Gupta**, Co-ordinator, DBT-MSUB-ILSPARE for allowing the use of Central Instrument facility at the Vikram Sarabhai Science Block, MSUB.

I acknowledge the financial support provided to me by University Grant Commission (UGC) and The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India for my fellowship.

I feel privileged to acknowledge **Dr. Prashant Murumkar**, Department of Pharmacy, MSUB and **Ms. Shruti Bhatt**, IIT Bombay for their guidance and providing laboratory facilities to accomplish the *"in-silico"* study. My sincere gratitude to Center of Excellence (CoE) in Drug Discovery, NFDD Complex Department of Chemistry, Saurashtra University for helping me with the GC/MS analysis. Also, I would like to thank **Dr. Yoshihiro Nishi, Dr. Yanase, Dr. Tanaka** and **Riken Bioresource centre, Japan** for providing KGN cell-line.

I consider myself fortunate to work in a friendly, cheerful and encouraging team that became my family away from home. **Dr. Radha Maharjan** and **Dr. Nirja Chaudhari** are most warm-hearted seniors. They welcomed me wholeheartedly and I never had a single day of feeling like a newbie. Both of them helped me understand the research environment of a university setup. Radha didi and Nirja have been more of sisters and closest friends to me. They have been constantly helping me with every small and big problems of mine, motivated me whenever I failed in any experiment and helped in troubleshooting and experimental designing.

Acknowledgements

Words are not enough to thank my lab junior **Ms. Shivani Dhadhal** for helping me get through the difficult times, and providing camaraderie, entertainment, and care throughout my PhD, both in professional as well as personal life. I could rely on her for any kind of experimental or administrative work, whenever my absence in the lab was unavoidable and I really appreciate the help. I thank you for our fruitful discussions and for the proof-reading of my thesis and manuscripts. The submission of my thesis would not have been possible without your kind help. I will always be indebted to you for that. I can never forget the fun we had while working together and also the evening chaay-nashta time. You taught me to love sev-mamra and green tea. I have also shared the best of my personal moments with her that I will cherish lifelong. I would like to thank **Prashant, Vasudha and Ananya** for their unconditional support. It was a pleasant experience working with you all and the memories will forever hold special place in my heart.

I would like to convey special thanks to **Kashmira**, **Shivani**, **Purna**, **Priyanka G**, **Priyanka O**, **Shweta and Ishita**, the dissertation students who have contributed substantially to this work. It was great working with you girls! Special thanks to **Gautami** for helping me with the referencing and proof-reading of the thesis. I would like to acknowledge **Ishita** for all the extra help in the cell-culture and real-time experiments. Sincere thanks to **Kashmira** for helping me with the ovarian histological photographs.

I have been fortunate enough to have interacted and worked with several enthusiastic, hard-working, intelligent and fun-loving M.Sc. students, who all have made this journey a beautiful and memorable one. Just to name a few- Mitali, Anita, Apoorva, Varsha, Mittal, Nirali, Rajpriya, Juhi, Hiral, Anjana, Dharana, Naisargi, Dipali, Piyush, Jhalak, Brij, Harshil, Indrajeet, Sourajit, Kuheli and Jay. Lots of love and blessings to all of you for a bright future.

Special thanks to **Ms. Sejal Purani** for always being there for me as my closest buddy, elder sister and the best room-mate. Sejal, thank you for cheering me up in my gloomy days and also for the love, support and care. I miss our madness-filled trips, photo sessions and parties. Ph.D. is a rollercoaster ride but your presence made my stay at MSUB a beautiful experience. I wish the best for your future endeavours.

I would further acknowledge all the present and past research scholars of the department for maintaining a healthy and friendly environment. I appreciate all the help that you all have rendered to me in some or the other way. I would like to mention a few names who have helped me in the experiments throughout the Ph.D. journey. Thank you **Paresh bhai, Kritarth, Milton, Anubhav, Dhruv, Anjali and Piyush** for helping me with the nanodrop readings,

Acknowledgements

centrifuges, real-time and western blot analysis. Cell-culture work would not have been possible without the enabled guidance of Laxmi didi. I would sincerely thank Tushar Sir, Abhay Sir, Akhilesh Sir, Gaurav, Mitul, Komal, Gurpreet and Kishan for all the troubleshooting regarding western blot analysis. I thank Shahnawaz, Sayantani, Nirali, Roma and Jayvadan for helping me in taking the ELISA readings and also allowing me to use the lab facility of gel rocker and hot air oven. I would like to thank Nikita for teaching me the basics and operation of HPLC system. Sincere thanks to Nishant Parmar, for helping me with the iThenticate analysis and always being proactive in facilitating any kind of help.

I would also like to thank **Milind bhai** and **Mayur bhai** at the administrative department of MSUB head office, for facilitating speedy execution of the administrative processes right from PhD registration to the final submission of this thesis.

Above all, I wish to pay my sincerest homage to my parents, **Mr. Aloke Dey** and **Mrs. Pompy Dey** whose sacrifice and tireless effort towards me has taken the stature that can never be replenished by any word of gratitude. I owe everything to them. To Maa and Baba, I dedicate this thesis. I express my loving thanks to my dearest brother, **Arnav Dey**, for supporting me, especially during the tough time of Covid-19 pandemic when I wrote this thesis.

My deepest gratitude goes to my **in-laws** without whose great patience, unflagging support and encouragement this work would have never been finished. I am really grateful to them for their constant love and blessings.

I take this moment to express my gratitude to my husband, **Mr. Vidyadhar Jha**, for understanding and supporting my goals and aspirations that made the completion of my Ph.D. possible. His love, care and encouragement has been my strength even in tough times. His patience and sacrifice will continue to be my inspiration and I am thankful to him for believing in my capabilities more than I did.

Finally, I would like to thank everybody who was important to the successful realization of this thesis and whose names I might have inadvertently missed out.

Last but not the least, I thank the Almighty for granting me the strength, wisdom, health and patience to work through all these years enabling me to its completion.

Arpi Dey