

Acknowledgement

This thesis is compilation of experiences and hard work for the research which I have carried out since last five years. In this time period, I have worked with many people whose contribution to my research and making this thesis in many ways deserve special mention. Here, it is great pleasure to convey my gratitude and acknowledgment to them.

The words would be less to thank my guide Dr. Kauresh D. Vachhrajani who promoted me to work in this field and guided me during my research from initial to final phase. His constant endeavour to explore the new avenues in research helped me to strengthen my ideas of research. I thank him for offering freedom to use my potential. Finally I owe my gratitude to him being a philosopher, guide and academic father.

I am thankful to Dr. (Ms) G. S. Padate, who remained as Head, Department of Zoology during the time frame of initiation of work and permitted me to work at the department availing the necessary facilities. I thank to Dr. P. C. Mankodi, Head, Department of Zoology for his suggestions and help whenever needed. I thank his elderly and experienced guidance during the study period. I thank to Dr. Nikhil Desai, Head, Department of Geology, for grant me permission to use laboratory for my research work. I thank to Dr. Pranav Pandya for being with me during my early phase of research career and teach me the basic lessons of field study. I part to my gratitude to my seniors Dr. Chandresh Dave, Mr. Virag Vyas, Dr. Seema Verma, Dr. Kiran Maurya, Dr. Ankita Parikh, and Dr. Manan Shukla for their support. I thank to Khushali Pandya for her help during my sediment analysis work. I thank to Jignesh Trivedi for his help to identify of brachyuran crab species. I thank to Gunjal Soni for making colour plates of crab specimens.

I thank the non teaching staff of the Department, the Faculty and the University for their Co-operation and friendly attitude.

I thank to people of Kamboi village for making my research journey comfortable and memorable. I have no word to describe their kindness and warmth during my stay at Kamboi. I thank to Mukeshbhai for provide me room during my tenure of stay at Kamboi and always being their to provide me all facility for my comfort during my stay. I thank to Dayakaka and Hasumasi for their wonderful

hosting during my stay and provide me excellent food during my stay at Kamboi. I would like to thanks Ashok, Narendrabhai and Nirmalbhai for their help during my field work and during my stay at Kamboi.

I would like to mention my special thanks to my friends Bhavesh, Ketan, Gunjan, Dhaval, Himanshu and Dipendra for their help during my field study. I would like to thank Dr. Hitesh Kardani, Pradip Prajapati, Dr. Sandip Munjpara, Kala Mokariya, Irshad Theba, Dr. Nikunj Gajera, Manish Gor Sir, Daxa Sakhiya, Dr. Gopi G. V. and Mr. Qamar Qureshi for their support and well wishes during the different phase of my Ph.D. life. I would like to thanks Vandit Desai and Kunjlata aunty to provide me stay during my thesis writing period at Vadodara.

I owe my hearty gratitude to Diptididi and baa for ever homely welcome and support. I like to thanks my family members Chirag, Jaydip, Hetal, Kapildan, Khushbu, Sidhharth, Saloni, Lakhabhai, Ashokmama, Shardama and grandma for believing in me and provide constant support to complete my Ph.D. I owe my gratitude to my best friends Mayur, Mayank, Dhaval, Adarsh and Amit for their enormous support during my emotional as well as financial crisis during the tenure of my Ph.D.

I especially thanks to my hard working father who have sacrificed his life for me and my sister and provide unconditional love and care. I love him so much, and I would not have made it this far without him.

The best outcome from these past five years is finding my best friend, soul-mate and wife. I married the best person out there for me. Rajal is the only person who has ability to convince me for work without my mood. Rajal has been a true and great support and has unconditionally loved me during my good and bad times. She has faith in me and my potential even when I felt like digging hole and crawling into one because sometimes I didn't have faith in myself. These past several years have not been an easy ride, both academically and personally. I truly thank Rajal for sticking by my side, even when I was Irritable and depressed.

Though the list is long, but it will not be possible to name each and every people who molded the situations in my favour and helped me to complete this work. Here, I thank one and all of them with my fine sense of respect and gratitude.