

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Though only my name appears on the cover of this thesis, a great many people have contributed to its production. I wish to express my sincere regards to those who have contributed to this thesis and supported me in one way or the other during this remarkable journey.

First and foremost, I wish to thank my guide Prof. (Dr.) Vanisha Nambiar, for encouraging my research and for allowing me to grow as a researcher. I am thankful to her for all her contribution of profound knowledge, inspiring guidance, constructive criticism, soothing affection and time to make my PhD. experience productive and stimulating. Her joy and enthusiasm for research was contagious and motivational for me.

My heartfelt gratitude to Prof. (Dr.) Meenakshi Mehan, Head, Department of Foods and Nutrition for her valuable guidance and for providing the necessary facilities in the department. Her affection and encouragement were great mental support for me in this eventful PhD journey.

I express, my sincere gratitude to Prof. Uma Iyer, former Head, Department of Foods and Nutrition and former Dean, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda for providing her valuable inputs and necessary support.

I extend my thanks to Prof. Anjali Karolia, Dean, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, for her support.

I am thankful to the ethical committee for understanding the study idea and giving clearance.

I shall forever remain extremely grateful to UGC for providing financial assistance for my study.

This thesis is a culmination of the work undertaken by the CSR project to improve health and nutrition of Ekalbara village, Padra taluka, rural Vadodara and I extend my deepest gratitude to TSIPL (Transpek Silox Industries Private limited) Vadodara and their entire CSR team especially Ms. Khushboo Joshi and Ms. Neelam and their HR team for their support and financial assistance.

A special thanks to all the mothers who sincerely participated and cooperated during the study. I reserve my sincere thanks to all the *anganwadi workers* who introduced me to the mothers and were a constant support during the intervention period.

I also thank all the teaching and non-teaching staff of the department of foods and nutrition who have supported and helped in some or the other way for having carried me along.

I am thankful to Mr. Ashish Guruji, Co-Ordinator, CDTP (Community Development Through Polytechnics) program of MHRM (Ministry of Human Resource Development), Government of India run by the Polytechnic college of The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, for carrying out training and sensitization program regarding solar lights, solar cookers and smokeless chulha in the study area.

I would also like to acknowledge Mr. Jay Patel for providing drumstick seeds for distribution in the village and Dr. Jatin Patel for his contribution in statistical analysis of the study.

Special thanks to Dr. Rujuta Giri, my research team member, my senior PhD colleague and a loving elder sister for her continuous encouragement and timely help. I greatly value our relation and deeply appreciate her belief in me.

I am grateful to my research team members and my juniors Ms. Madhusree Banerjee and Ms. Tanya Khanna and under-graduate students of Department of Foods and Nutrition, for their help and support who worked on the same CSR project with me, and formed a great team.

I am also thankful to my other research team members especially my senior PhD colleagues Dr. Vinita Rajput, Dr. Neha Sareen, and Ms. Roshni Vakilna and my junior Ms. Tanisha Das for their timely help and support.

I would also like to acknowledge all my PhD colleagues in Foods and Nutrition department especially Dr. Shruti Kantawala, Dr. Mital Dave, Dr. Annapurna Maity, Dr. Kuhu Roy, Dr. Nidhi Jain, Dr. Pawan Thakur, Ms. Shweta Patel, Dr. Harsha Hirdayani, Ms. Prachi Deota, Ms. Abnita Thakuria, Ms. Shruti Dwivedi and Ms. Debanjana Bhattacharya and my junior Ms. Sulagna Bandyopadhyay for their valuable discussion and support.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to my room-mate and dear friend Ms. Jinal Thakker, my hostel friends Dr. Nidhi Astik, Dr. Shagufta Ansari, Ms. Mrunali Damania, Dr. Oishi Roy, Ms. Shruti Das, Dr. Meenakshi Joshi, Dr. Chandam Devi who were of great mental support in deliberating over my problems and findings, as well as providing happy distraction to rest my mind outside of my research. I also thank my friend and PhD colleague Mr. Tejas Vyas for his support and helping me in translating my documents into local language.

I sincerely express my gratitude to my local guardians in Vadodara Mrs. Sumita Sen, Mr. Swapan Sen, Mrs Minati Sen, Mrs. Nandita Roy and my cousins Siddharth and Sonali for their utmost love care and necessary support throughout my PhD journey in a new city away from home.

I am grateful to all my teachers especially Dr. Banani Dey, Dr. Nandita Das, Dr, Sonali Ghosh, Dr. Anindita Chakravarti and Dr. Aditi Roy Chowdhury for their guidance, encouragement, valuable suggestions which inspired and motivated me to pursue my career in academic research.

I whole heartedly thank all my friends and relatives back there in my hometown especially Ms. Debanjali Jairam, Dr. Sourav Talukder, Mr. Rittick Chowdhury, Ms. Sumana Roy Chowdhury, Ms. Sayantani Jana, Ms. Pubali Ray, Ms. Debolina Chatterjee, Ms. Ranjini Sarkar and my best friend and fiancé Mr. Sujoy Paul for their constant support and encouragement throughout my PhD journey.

Last but not the least my heart felt regard goes to my parents Mr. Bijesh Saha and Dr. (Mrs.) Mallika Saha and my grandmother Mrs. Anuradha Ray to whom this thesis is dedicated. I would not have stood steady through all these times without the love and patience of my family. I consider myself extremely blessed to have such a lovely and caring family, standing beside me with their unconditional support throughout.

Thank you!!

---

Chitarpita Saha

26/08/2019