

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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 Dr. Mini Sheth, Associate Professor, Department of Foods and Nutrition, for encouraging my research and for allowing me to grow as a researcher. I am thankful to her for all her contributions of profound knowledge, inspiring guidance, constructive criticism, soothing affection and time to make my Ph.D. experience productive and stimulating. The joy and enthusiasm she has for her research was contagious and motivational for me.

I express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Uma Iyer, Head, Department of Foods and Nutrition for providing the necessary all the support for carrying out my research work,

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

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

Very special thanks to my dearest friend Deepa who has always been there to listen and counsel me whenever I felt low.

My writing period was made enjoyable in large part due to the many friends that became a part of my life. I am grateful for time spent with my Ph.D mates Tanu Shree, Mital, Shruti, Arti Di, Nidhi, Neha and Pawan for making this journey full of joy and laughter. Thanks

are due to Vijeta Di for her encouragement and valuable inputs. I also extend my thanks to Swati, Akankasha, Ashima and Ruchi for extending help and support whenever required.

I express my gratitude to Shivani Bhabhi who like a mother took special care and supported me during this journey.

Words would be less to thanks Daskha ben, who took care of my daughter like a mother. It was her presence at home which helped me to concentrate on work with the assurance of my daughter being in safe hands and taken care off well.

Heartfelt thanks to my mother, the maker of my life who selflessly supported me against all odds and like a pillar always stood by my side. I express my gratitude to my elder brother and bhabhi for their boundless love, immaculate affection, constant inspiration, moral support and above all, their blessings.

I would like to offer my thanks to my parent- in- laws, Arpit bhaiya and Aparna for their encouragement, inspiration, love and affection.

I am indeed indebted to my husband Ankit for not only being been a source of motivation and encouragement; but for his cooperation. I would not have been where I am today with regard to completion of my thesis. He has always encouraged me to take my time to attend to this important requirement of my career.

Lastly, my gratitude to my beloved little daughter Aadviqa, who silently witnessed my absence during the course of study. Her smile served as a stress buster and gave me strength to pursue this dissertation to its completion.

Shriya Seksaria