

Acknowledgment

Finally, I am here- the voyage seems worthwhile ☺ ☺

I am looking forward to writing this section of my thesis because it doesn't require any references. The first person I want to thank is my guru, Prof. Mini Sheth, because she was the only one who kept me encouraged during all the ups and downs of my path. I still recall the time I was preparing to start my Ph.D., but because of unforeseen circumstances, I was unable to enrol. I went to professor Mini Sheth for advice on the topic of food fortification. Ma'am, I want to thank you for believing in me and letting me research under your expert guidance. Ma'am has not only assisted me academically but has also been a huge source of emotional support for me. I vividly recall those sleepless nights and downcast days when all I needed to do to feel a bit better was talk to her..

I sincerely thank Dean Prof. Anjali Karolia for her help and direction in all the areas where I was stumped. I really appreciate the collaboration and assistance of the Department of Food and Nutrition's teachers and non-teaching employees.

Second, I'd want to express my gratitude to Ms. Deepti Gulati, who gave a seminar at our institution and motivated me to choose this topic. She also provided me with unwavering support over the phone whenever I had questions.

A special thanks to Kankona and Debanjana for helping me with paperwork while I was out of town and for all the laughs we shared in that room over our cups of coffee while working.

This journey was an absolute roller coaster because so much happened during my Ph.D.'s active years—from the passings of my loved ones during Covid to the passing of my father (Shri Krishna Dutt Sharma), who departed just one month before I submitted my synopsis, to other significant changes in my personal life. While it was difficult, I was able to maintain my composure thanks to Waheguru's love and the blessings of my Papa .

I still recall the time during my BSc when I decided to pursue a Ph.D.; this was motivated by my passion for nutrition and the encouragement of others who did not think highly of me. My opinion is that earning a Ph.D. entails much more than just academic success. It involved winning a battle in which my participation had previously been questioned, teaching myself to have tremendous patience,

and overcoming numerous obstacles while maintaining a cheery expression on my emotionally spent face.

Regrettably, it is no longer possible for me to have my father present for some of the significant events in my life. Since he was the one I was not born to, but who chose to raise me with all the love, care, comfort, and fatherhood, I suppose the reason I grew up as a strong woman despite having a very complicated life since childhood was because of him. I also want to thank my mother, Ms. Beena Sharma, for always encouraging me to pursue my goals. Your supplication for me has kept me going up until now Mumma.

I consider myself fortunate to have Yamini and Jeby as friends because of all the support, jokes, and warmth you guys offered me, even when I failed.

My sincere gratitude to Mr. Kunal Bhardwaj, my friend, coworker, and now husband, for all the kindness and concern he showed me and the tremendous support I have been receiving from him on an emotional, academic, and professional level. Although I had lost confidence in humanity a long time ago, this man has significantly altered my perspective on it. I was suffering from acute jaundice during my synopsis, but this man kept me focused and simply enabled the submission by constantly jogging around and taking care of me.

The final word goes to my Four Paw Therapist and my "Khushi ka Pitaara," my gorgeous kitty "Paakhi," for consistently spreading happiness inside our home, playing cheerfully no matter what, and licking out all of my tears when I was feeling depressed. Her presence is wonderful.

Yet, I would always remember to keep learning and acquiring new abilities that will be expected from me after holding this esteemed degree in my hand. Life will be challenging outside of this academic environment, where there will be new difficulties, learnings, and failures. I'm still anticipating the opportunity to hang the nameplate in front of my house, promoting pride through reading Dr. Ahuja.

If you work on something a little bit every day, you end up with something that is massive.

– Kenneth Goldsmith

For the love and respect of the degree of Philosophy

‘You are not just the paper but a complete chapter of my life

I have lost people and patience, during the hard years but for you, I strived

Holding you in my hand, was always a dream

Completing those ROL chapters is what I can recall going down the stream

The referencing was the most difficult part about you

It was the time when food was on the table and I was stuck on the computer with glue

Recalling it all, the journey looks worth it

Thanks for teaching me a lot about research, I am now ready to deserve it'

~ With Love Ria Ahuja