

## Acknowledgements

The successful completion of this journey is due to the combined efforts of many people. Ph. D. is a long and complicated journey. During this journey, I was helped by many and I would like to show my gratitude to all of them. This work would not have been finished without their help.

Primarily, a very special thanks to my supervisor and mentor, Dr. Pushpa Robin, whose help, stimulating suggestions and encouragement helped me continuously right from the initiation of my work. Your guidance has been invaluable. Thank you for your patience, understanding, excellent discussions, and challenging me every day. She made me learn the intricacies of how to do keen and critical analysis of each experiment. Words are not enough to describe her generous nature. I will always remember her for her understanding and positive attitude towards everything.

I sincerely thank the Head of Department, Prof. G. Naresh Kumar for giving access and providing me with the necessary infrastructure and other departmental facilities for my research purpose. I express my gratitude to former Head, Prof. Sarita Gupta for all encouragement during her tenure as head. A special thanks to her is also due for allowing me to use the fluorescence microscope in her laboratory for my experiments.

I am indebted to my M. Sc research guide Prof. Rasheedunnisa Begum, for sowing the seeds for research in me.

I am sincerely obliged to all the teachers of the department Prof. Tara Mehta, Prof. S. S. Katyare, (late) Prof. S. D. Telang, Dr. M. D. Jani, Dr. Jayashree pohnerkar, Dr. C. RatnaPrabha, Dr. S.R. Acharya, Dr. N. Laxmipriya and Dr. D. Suthar for their help and encouragement. Their helpful suggestions and comments especially during annual progress presentations helped me a lot.

I thank the Divisional Railway Manager, Vadodara, India for allowing me to use their Jatropha plantation for my experiments. I would also extend my gratitude to Dr. Bhaskar Vyas for extending help and allow to planting Jatropha for experiment in his land.

The happiness during my Ph. D days was to seek the company of friends, who brought about joy during toughest days of my life. I gratefully acknowledge the support of some very special individuals. They helped me immensely by giving me encouragement and friendship. My Ph. D. would not have attained this shape without their help, especially Iqbal (Dabang), Hemendra (a great science troubleshooter), Hiren Modi (Financer), Hina, Aditi, Niraj bhatt (great advisor) and Jyotika with whom I shared some memorable times. I thank them for their help with experiments, discussions and umpteen cups of tea. I truly cherish the company of friends like Chirayu, Gopit, Keyurbhai, Shajilbhai, Vikasbhai, Prashantbhai, Maulikbhai with whom I shared tea at circle. Thanks are also due to the present batch of Research Scholars, Nidheesh, Anubha, Tushar, Krishma, Akhilesh, Mitesh, Muskan, Radha, Mrinal, Rushikesh, Swapnali, Hiral, Supriya, Divya, Prashant, Jitendra, Chanchal, Hemanta, Kavita, Sonal madam and Praveena madam. My special thanks to my lab mates Purna and Ashutosh for their help in the lab. I cannot forget the valuable contribution of all M.Sc. dissertation students Keyur Battiwala, Priya, Brijesh Dabhi, Shweta, Bhavita, Rucha and Pramod who worked with me. Keyur helped me identifying Jatropha plantations and in many other ways.

Thanks are due to the office staff including Pethe Sir, Akshitaben, Bhartiben, Shaileshbhai, Manishbhai, Vyasbhai, Rameshbhai Kamle and Babukaka all other staff members for their standing help and guidance. Thanks a lot, Rameshbhai (Nare) for keeping the Store open for me any time whenever wanted. I also thank Milindbhai for all help at the main office.

I thank University Grant Commission, India for providing research fellowship, without which I could not have thought of doing Ph. D.

Lastly, and most importantly, I wish to thank my entire extended family for providing a cool and loving environment for me. My father who always insisted on meditation and taught me the benefits of a spiritual life. My mother and sister deserve

special thanks for their love and for always giving me special consideration and keeping me in high spirits.

During this journey, I cannot forget the sacrifices made by my wife...Kiran and my son...Gotu (Ravi). She proved to be supportive and caring and provided me comfort, during those never-ending delays. She is the one who knows me more than I do, which makes me more confident about my journey onwards. Thanks a lot for her patience. I thank them a lot for their immense patience and confidence in me.

## I dedicate this thesis to my parents for being there for me always.

I immensely thank the "ALMIGHTY" for blessing me with a life full of challenges and success.

Viiav Makwana