

## Acknowledgement

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*It is a pleasant aspect that I have now the opportunity to express my gratitude for all those who accompanied and supported me in this journey and writing this note of thanks is the finishing touch on my thesis. Writing this thesis has had a big impact on me. This research work is a milestone in my academic career. I would like to reflect on the people who have supported and helped me so much throughout this period.*

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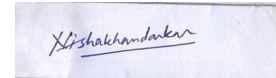
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