PREFACE

The topic of my PhD Thesis comes naturally to me since I had my M Phil Dissertation on “The Role of South African Human Rights Commission in Post-Apartheid Era”. In fact, it is Mahatma Gandhi’s non-violence and Satyagraha in the pre-independent India, brought us freedom from the yoke of the British rule. This concept rejuvenated in me to think of a great nation South Africa in the same manner, because they were also going through the same traumatic situation apartheid in their own country. It would be more meaningful and worthwhile to think of a great personality like Nelson Mandela, who advocated against apartheid and thought of universal declaration of human rights of 1948. Being a human being, I have really been inspired by both Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. Especially, to my generation Nelson Mandela is the role model and champion of the human rights movement across the globe.

This Thesis is a serious outcome of my thought and beginning of a new era in the field of human rights and the national human rights institutions in India and South Africa. This Thesis goes in an ascending order. It begins with conceptual clarification about my PhD topic, “National Human Rights Commission of India and South Africa: A Comparative Study in Institutional Effectiveness”. Followed by human rights discourse in India and South Africa, structure and function of the commissions, case studies and comparative contrasts. This thesis is a modest attempt to understand the need of the NHRIs in democracies, especially India and South Africa.

Today in a globalized world, every citizen must be conscious and concerned for the protection of their human rights. I hope the transition of apartheid to democracy in South Africa will give you more insights; while a comparative analysis of the National Human Rights Commissions (NHRCs) in India as well as in South Africa will help enlighten the academic intelligentsia and will help empower an informed citizenry across the world, especially of both the nations.

This is really a fascinating work and I was quite passionate to complete it with utmost love and hard work, realizing the plight of Indians during the British era and four centuries of oppressions (apartheid period) of South Africans in their own country.