Acknowledgement

“Success has many parenthood whereas failure dies as an orphan” – English Proverb

This Thesis would not have been possible without the help of many people in so many ways. I am using this opportunity to express my gratitude to everyone who supported me throughout the course of my research work. I am thankful for their inspiring guidance, invaluable constructive criticism and friendly advice during the research work. I am sincerely grateful to them for sharing their truthful and illuminating views on a number of issues related to my research work.

A million thanks to the Almighty God, for his everlasting love and grace. I would not have come so far, without His Protection and direction.

Blessings of His Holiness Sri Sri Rajendra Mahaswamiji and His Holiness Sri Sri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji, Sri Kshetra Suttur for their vision of providing quality higher education to common people like me.

I would like to thank Dr. B. Suresh, Vice Chancellor, JSSU, Dr. B. Manjunatha, Registrar, JSSU, Dr. H. Basavanagoudappa, Principal, JSS Medical College for giving me admission into the program and to pursue my Ph.D dream. Many leaves have turned in my life since I joined the program. Due thanks for lending a helping hand at all times of need.

“Salutation to the noble guru, who opened the eyes blinded by darkness of ignorance with the collyrium - stick of knowledge.”

I express my profound gratitude to my doctoral committee members: Dr. N.C. Ashok, Dr. S. Balasubrmanian and Dr. M. Prashanthi Devi for constantly mentoring me in my research work.

Foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor and guide Dr. N.C. Ashok, Professor, Department of Community Medicine, JSS Medical College, JSS University under whom I have worked for the past 8 years since my MD post graduation. His care, concern, motivation and encouragement have been useful throughout my research work.

My Co-advisor and DC Member, Prof. S Balasubrmanian, Director Research and Dean Faculty of Life Sciences, JSS University, who was not only my advisor rather treated me like his own daughter and wanted me not only to succeed academically, but also in all walks of my life. His continuous support and constant motivation made me enrol into Ph.D. I will forever be grateful for his amazing mentoring, support and care. Most of the exposures and skills I have acquired throughout the program were all because of his guidance. The opportunity provided me with lots of exposures and skills for my future career. I am especially intrigued about how Dr. S. Balasubrmanian set aside his precious time and worked with me for hours on the entire research. I offer my heartfelt gratitude for all that he has done and will continue to do for me.
Besides my guide, and co-guide, I would like to thank Dr. M. Prashanthi Devi, Doctoral Committee Member, Department of Environmental Management, Bharathidasan University for her immense knowledge, invaluable and constructive suggestions throughout the work and especially for resourcefulness in GIS mapping and modelling. She is a constant mentor, excellent human being who rendered care and concern throughout my research work. I really appreciate her selfless attitude and kindness.

I express my sincere gratitude to Dr. S. Rajakumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Marine Biotechnology, Bharathidasan University for his expertise in bringing this thesis into a new look.

This work would not have been possible without the kind and generous attitude of Dr. M. Visweshwaran, Bharath Hospital and Institute of Oncology, Mysore for providing the cancer data.

I express my gratitude to Dr. M. Renuka, Professor and Head, Department of Community Medicine, for the encouragement and support she provided in all my new ventures.

To all the faculty and staff in the Department of Community Medicine and Life Sciences, I very much appreciate your guidance and support throughout my studies. I was never turned away by them, especially when I was emotionally weak and down.

With Pleasure, I offer my special thanks to Dr. A. Thangavel, for his inputs that helped to progress in my work, I thank my fellow research scholars, Dr. RamyaRathan, Mrs.Latha K., Mrs. Ayesha Sulthana, Dr. Mamtha, Mr. M ArunPandiyam, Ms. S. Umadevi, Ms. Brinda and specially Mrs. Janani Selvaraj and Ms.R. Vidyalakshmi for the sleepless nights we were working together and for all the fun we had during the conference and workshops that we attended together.

"Behind every successful woman is not only herself; but also the man who says she can do it and the entire family to support her endeavours."

I am grateful to my own family; my father Shri. K.S. Basave Gowda, mother Shrimathi B. S. Premalatha for providing the good education, my husband Dr. K. M Srinath for his patience, care, love and support in all the ways as possible, my children Tanirika and Vishank who understood the shortcomings in the due care and love when needed most, my brother Mr. Kiran, B. Mr. Rakesh, D.R., for their support and all friends, relatives for their support in many ways. And utmost thanks to my mother-in-law Mrs. K.C. Bhadramma and father-in-law Mr. K.C. Marulaiah for their constant prayers and the care they gave to my family during these four years.

My sincere thanks to everyone else whose name is not mentioned here but has been a great part in my intellectual journey. You have endowed me with good things and fruitful experience.......

Dr. Madhu, B.