PREFACE

Experience of working as a special educationist in the field of mental retardation for the last 15 years, attracted me to do the research study on the present theme which is recently started in India. The course of children's development is heavily influenced by the experiences of the early years. The early years are also the foundation years and for this reason being involved in special education, I find something of interest and value for this contribution of linking research and practice.

While submitting this thesis for the award of Ph.D. degree, I am filled with a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction which I would like to share with the people who have contributed to this study.

The single most important contribution to this effort has been made by my guide Dr.(Mrs) Harshida Pandit. Working with her was a great pleasure and rich and rewarding experience. Her unwillingness to compromise on small matters resulted in upgrading the quality of this work and was also responsible for infusing in me the 'spirit' of research which will remain with me for all times to come.

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