I declare that this thesis, submitted to Manipal Academy of Higher Education, for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is my original work, conducted under the supervision of my guide Dr. Santhosh Chidangil and co-guide, Dr. Unnikrishnan V. K. I also wish to inform that no part of the research has been submitted for a degree of examination at any university. References, help and material obtained from other sources have been acknowledged.

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