Acknowledgements

In the human sphere, words can never be enough to show deep, heartfelt appreciations. Thus, I wish to present this thesis as a tribute in memory of Late Dr. Diwakar Patel for putting forward this research topic and inspiring my mentor to work over it.

I express a deep sense of gratitude and indebtedness to my guide, Dr. Haresh R. Keharia, for first finding me worthy as his PhD student and secondly for the excellent supervision, advice and encouragement during this PhD journey. He gave me enough freedom to learn the things and infact challenged me to a more independent thinking and a deeper understanding of scientific work. Without him, I would have been lost in experiments. I thank you, for becoming a critical mentor in every rehearsal for my presentation in most of the national and international conferences; for your energetic supervision in all the chapters; and for the suggestion to improve the English of papers and the present thesis, I appreciate it a lot. Although Thanks is a very small word to convey my feeling regarding your patience, understanding and support, I thank you very much sir and apologize for whatever mistakes I have done till now.

I would also like to thank Mrs. Uma H. Keharia and Ms. Unnati, for providing me a home, a family in this new state. I cannot possibly forget the immense concern, care, and love shown to me by them immediately after I arrived in Vidyanagar; and since then it was the selfless offer of one assistance or the other. They always encouraged me in the tough times, when I used to get depressed. Thus, I dare say that without both individuals, certain accomplishments would have been unrealized, or at best, near-pyrrhic.

I am thankful to University Grant Commission, New Delhi, for the offer of the Research Fellowship Scheme for Meritorious Student (RFSMS) to pursue my PhD research.

I am profoundly grateful to the former Head, Prof. K.S. Rao, and present head In-charge Prof. Harish Padh for providing necessary laboratory facilities required for the successful completion of this work.

Next, I want to thanks the teachers of BRD School of Biosciences. I dedicate my special thanks to Prof. Kamlesh C. Patel and Dr. Ujjwal B. Trivedi, who guided and advised me whenever required. Thanks a lot.

I would like to acknowledge the technical support I received from Sophisticated Instrumentation Centre for Applied Research and Teaching (SICART), CVM, Vallabh Vidyanagar and Central Salt and Marine Chemical Research Institute (CSM CRI), CSIR, Bhavnagar.

Special thanks to my friend, Ms. Neeta B. Gol, who helped me to cope with the ups and downs during this PhD tenure. Her nice talks, discussions not always the ‘girl stuff’ but regarding our research work and paper writing often inspired me to write papers. I will really miss those weekend celebrations which often recharged us for the forecoming hectic weeks. Thank you for being such a good friend.
Thanks are due to M.s. Honey Patel, for sharing her delicious lunch during the period of my thesis writing. At times, I eat up all the food she brought for herself, she happily went to the canteen to get some for her own. Thanks dear. Thanks a lot for the love and care.

Many thanks to all my seniors and colleagues, Dr. Sushma Deepthi, Dr. Kiran Rajput, Dr. Hardik Bhatt, Dr. B. Kavita, Dr. Khyati Pathak, Dr. Shraddha Trivedi, Mr. Umang Bharucha, Mr. Ajit Patel, Ms. Deval Patel, Ms. Sananda Chattraj, Ms. Saumya Menon, Mr. Vimal Prajapati, Mr. Gopal Yadav, Mr. Sanket Ray and Ms. Khusboo Rawal for the untiring co-operation and all the great times which we enjoyed together! I will miss those moments for sure.

Thanks are due to Manikandan, Roopam, Basil and Mafat for sparing their valuable time in downloading full text article whenever I asked.

Special thanks to Sandip bhai, for standing beside me during the formatting and printing of this thesis.

Last but not the least, I would like to acknowledge my granny Mrs. Dipali Bose, my father Mr. Indu Bhushan Bose, my mother Mrs. Sonali Bose and my darling sister Aparna Bose for the never-ending support that they gave me. When the times get hard and I felt like quitting, you were my reason to keep standing strong and running faster towards the finish line.

Finally, science belongs to God the Omni scientist, without whom mankind can do no science. Hence I am grateful to him, for giving me this wonderful life and opportunities to do small re-search in his belongings.

Anjali Bose