ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“A voice said, look me in the stars
And tell me truly, men of earth,
If all the soul-and-body scars
Were not too much to pay for birth”

Frost, Robert 1942

This poem of Robert Frost, titled ‘A Question’ gives enough breadth and depth for an adept reader to make interpretations and draw inferences. To this researcher, the 'question' of Frost is more of an answer reflecting on the daily lives of people when their constructive intentions, deliberations, activities and their impact go unnoticed. It is a cause of concern, if there is an existence of philosophical blindness in this area and that is what undermines the agential activities. Traditional strategy research assumes that strategy is something that 'organisations have'. This research takes a different approach and views strategy as something that 'people do'. By taking this path, this research moves away from the traditional normative models and underlines the importance of human activities in strategising.

Behind this effort is a journey that has been guided, supported and encouraged by people who are near and far. Here is an attempt to at least not let their patient efforts go unnoticed.

My uncle, late Shri TGJ Unnithan was a major support all through my life. The memories of my interactions with him always helped me to pursue and complete this work. He was the light which led me on this path. I remember him at this juncture.

I have been lucky to find an inspiring philosopher, academic mentor and a wonderful friend in my research supervisor. Prof A Gangopadhyay PhD had the great influence on the completion of this thesis. His thought provoking questions and call for nothing less than the best made me strive and stretch my limits constantly. Thank You Sir.
I express my deep gratitude to Prof S Parasuraman PhD, Director, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) for his constant encouragement and unstinted support for the completion of this work. I am greatly indebted to him.

I am grateful to Prof. Lina Kashyap PhD, Deputy Director of TISS and Prof. Lakshmi Lingam PhD, Deputy Director of TISS Hyderabad Campus for their kind support in the completion of this research.

Prof. Sharit Bhowmik PhD, Dean, School of Management and Labour Studies has encouraged and supported me throughout the period of this study. I am very grateful to him.

I am very thankful to Prof. Neela Dabir PhD, Registrar, TISS for supporting me immensely in proceeding ahead with this work.

I owe special debt of gratitude to all the interviewees of the case organisations, B1 and B2 for sharing their invaluable time and relevant information with me. The Chairman and Managing Director of B1 and the Managing Director of B2 were very supportive of this study. I am immensely indebted to them. This dissertation would not have existed without their backing and foresight.

I should particularly thank Prof. Silvia Gherardi of University of Trento, Italy; Prof Bente Elkjaer, University of Aarhus, Denmark; Prof Dalvir Samra-Fredericks of Nottingham Business School, UK and Dr. Daniel Gieger, Johannes Kepler University, Austria; Mr Lyndon Rego, Centre for Creative Leadership, USA for helping me with the comments and constructive criticisms at different stages of this study. It always kept me on my toes.

My conversations with certain people, during the course of this study distilled my thoughts on the various aspects of my work. I have benefitted immensely from my discussions with Mr Pradeep Erinjery, Managing Director (MD) of Thirdware Solutions; Mr T Koshy, Director, Ernst and Young; Mr Girish N, Chief Operating Officer, Netcore Solutions; Dr Santanu Sarkar, Associate Professor, XLRI School of Business and Human Resources; Mr Ashis Sen, Vice Chairman, Forum for Emotional
Intelligence and Learning; Mr Jayaram Shetty, MD, VCG Consulting; Mr M.G. Gopakumar, Sr. Manager, Infosys; Dr Sunil Maheswari, MD, Samatvam Academy; Mr Vibhu Goel, Consultant, KPMG; Mr Abhinav Verma, Consultant, Accenture; Ms Anvesha Singh and Ms Nidhi Sharma, Assistant HR Managers, RPG, Ms Richa Vermani, Consultant, Ernst and Young; Ms Vidya T, NIMHANS, Ms Ramshida, Calicut University, Mr T.N. Gopakumar, ex-student of TISS, Ms Ruchi Sinha, Mr K Ravindran, Dr S. Palo and Mr K Purandaran of TISS, Mr. Max Martin, Sussex University, Ms Deepa Agarwal, my former colleague in the Centre for Social and Organisational Leadership and my students. I am thankful to all of them for being my bouncing boards.

My efforts were aided at various points by my colleagues in the School of Management and Labour Studies and friends at TISS. I am grateful to Dr Muttayya K, the chief Librarian and his team for all the help. Dr Mallikarjun A, Dr Satish K, Mr Puttaraj C, Ms Kiran K, Ms Devyani P, Mr Ravi S and Mr Harish were very kind and helped me to source articles and books. Mr Shivakumar, Systems Manager and Mr Yogesh of the cyber library were very quick to help me out with ‘systemic’ issues. Ms Vaishali Gajbiye, Ms Sujatha Tupe and Ms Alka Chavan were kind enough to support me whenever I had trouble with the structuring and formatting of texts and tables. I am grateful to all of them.

I am thankful to Mr Dileep Shetty, Deputy Registrar, Personnel and Mr Santosh Palve for responding to my administrative needs and queries. I thank profusely Mr Vinayak Shinde for diligently formatting the manuscript of this thesis, Mr Dileep Poyyara for doing a great job of making the illustrations, Ms Roja Pillai, Ms Neema K, Mr Nirmal Kumar, Mr Vijay Gimonkar and Mr Ramasubramanian for their concern and support. Ms Pusha Singal and Mr Umesh Ashok Chandane were very kind and provided logistical support whenever needed. I am immensely thankful to both of them.

My family has been an enormous source of strength and vigor throughout these long days and nights spent on my research. They were kind enough to let me fly in the skies and grow on the grounds of their imaginations. I am very thankful to Mrs
and Mr KGP Unnithan, my parents; Ms Savita, my partner; Mr Jayakrishnan, my brother; Mrs and Mr Shivshankar, my in-laws, Mrs Vatsala Unnithan, my aunt; and Mr Anil J, Dr Sunil J, Dr Anjaly J, Mr Shibu, Mr Manoj, my cousins for their understanding, care and for being the constant source of inspiration and instruction.

P Vijayakumar