Looking back, I am surprised and at the same time very grateful for all I have received throughout these years. It has certainly shaped me as a person and has led me where I am now. All these years of PhD studies are full of such gifts.

The first and foremost “thank you” goes to Allah. He has given me the strength and mind opening to see this study through. Without his care, blessings and guidance, none of this would have been possible.

It would be sheer ignorance and arrogance to believe that any work of research can be an individual endeavour. I therefore humbly acknowledge the guidance and the help provided by my respected teacher and supervisor Dr. Saghir Ahmad Ansari, for his advice, constructive and valuable suggestions which made him the backbone of this research and so to this thesis. His involvement with his originality has triggered and nourished my intellectual maturity that I will benefit from, for a long time to come. Above all and the most needed, he provided me unflinching encouragement and support without which the length of the systematic and organised plan of study, the breadth of view, and supremely the deep study of my research work would have been impossible.

I express my deepest regards and gratitude to the Chairman, Department of Agriculture Economics and Business Management, AMU for providing all the necessary facilities during the course of this work. I would also like to thank all my respected Teachers and Non-Teaching staff of Dept. Agriculture Economics and Business Management, AMU and my student colleagues, for their encouragement, insightful comments, and hard comments.

It is my proud privilege and humble duty to acknowledge with gratitude, the help rendered to me by Dr. Jabir Ali, Associate Professor in Centre for Food and Agribusiness Management, Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Lucknow, for sparing his valuable time for my work. His able guidance and valuable suggestions helped in enriching the thesis. I am really indebted to him.

Most importantly, I want to thank my family. My wife, Dr. Uzma Khan and our child, Maria khan, helped me stay “grounded”. They were a steady source of love
and support. I am also grateful for my parents, siblings that were always very encouraging during this process.

Finally I would like to thank everybody who was important to successful realization of this thesis, as well as express my apology that I could not mention personally one by one.

Aarif Mohammad Khan