ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It gives me a great pleasure in expressing sincere thanks and profound gratitude to my respected teacher and guide Dr. L.M. Manocha, Head, G.H. Patel Institute of Materials Science, Sardar Patel University, Vallabhbh Vidyanagar, for his valuable guidance and encouragement during the course of my study. Without his untiring efforts to build the laboratory, stimulating suggestions and fraternal care, this work would not have been possible.

I sincerely thank Dr. (Mrs) S. Manocha, Reader, G.H. Patel Institute of Materials Science, Sardar Patel University, Vallabhbh Vidyanagar, for providing me guidance for part of the work i.e. on sol-gel synthesis and characterization. Her time to time suggestions and encouragement helped me in completing the work in time.

I am thankful to Dr. N.M. Batra and Dr. R.H. Patel, lecturers, G.H. Patel Institute of Materials Science, Sardar Patel University, Vallabhbh Vidyanagar, for their personal interest and encouragement during the present work.

I am thankful to my colleagues Mr. Hiren Bhatt, Mr. M.N. Joshi, Mr. Sanjay Shah, Mr. Rakesh Jasrai, Mr. Umesh Patel, Mr. Jignesh Patel and Mr. Deval Vashistha for their kind co-operation and discussions during this work.

I am thankful to M.Sc. students for their co-operation.
I am also thankful to the non teaching staff of the Institute for their cooperation.

I am grateful to Department of Science and Technology (DST) for providing me financial assistance during my tenure.

I am also thankful to Dept. of Chemistry, Bio-Science, Electronics and Physics for time to time help during the research period.

Finally, I am very much grateful to my parents and my wife Pragna for their love, blessings and inspiration.

(AJAY J. PATEL)