Acknowledgements

Today I wish to thank the Almighty whose benediction and grace has made this research work possible. I pray that this hidden force will always give me strength, courage, wisdom and power to face all the challenges of life.

I express my deep gratitude to my revered teacher, guide and mentor Prof. Malvinder Ahuja, Department of Education, Panjab University, Chandigarh. Merits volumes of appreciation and thanks for her unstinted help, immaculate guidance, keen interest, expert evaluation, constructive criticism, and above all her commitment to the discovery and testing of new methods, all of which have helped me in making this research work a logical conclusion. Working with her has been a great learning experience. I also extend my sincere gratitude towards my co-guide, Dr. Manju Gera, who has always encouraged me in difficult times.

Words are insufficient to owe my gratitude towards Prof. Anand Bhushan for his astonishing expertise in statistical science, without which the really fine-grained analysis in the thesis could not have been done. He has been very supportive and compassionate throughout the work. His sustained interest, constant encouragement, support and above all, the much needed and valued suggestions enabled me to finish this study.

I wish to thank Chairperson, Dr. Nandita, Department of Education, Panjab University, Chandigarh for providing me facilities for this project. I am indebted to Dr. Jyoti Khanna, Principal Dev Samaj College of Education for her continual love, support, and help in all the possible ways. Special thanks to Dr. Anita Nangia and Dr. Seema Sareen for sparing their time for friendly support, valuable suggestions and discussions.

I owe my gratitude to my erudite friends, Dr. Rachna Tyagi, Mr. Manoj Thakur and Mr. Rohit Bhandari who have always encouraged me and provided steadfast support to make it a reality. I am indebted to Ms. Rajveer Kaur and Ms. Yogita, for her support in every possible way.

I would like to thank and acknowledge the Principals and faculty members of the schools who permitted me to come into their classrooms to collect data during
the pilot and final study. I would also like to thank all those students who participated as subjects. Without their consent and participation, this research would not have been completed.

I am thankful to all the researchers and authors whose works I have used and quoted in my research report and without which it would not have been possible to link the missing gaps.

I would like to bow my head to my revered parents, Mrs. Manisha Malhan and Mr. Manohar Malhan, for giving me a beautiful life, standing beside me during thick and thin. Their blessings, unconditional love and emotional support have brought me at this stage of life. In this blissful moment, I am missing my papa who has never been away from my heart and has always enlightened my soul in my tough times. Special thanks go to my brother Mr. Vishal Malhan and sister Mrs. Monika. Their support has been an immeasurable help to complete this project. So, I shall limit myself to the difference they have made to my academic endeavours. To them, I owe my yesterday, today and tomorrow.

I would like to show my gratitude to Mr. Prashant Arya for his technical assistance. He had a very unpretentious way of working with me to complete the data analysis and to present it in a clear and concise manner. I would also like to thank Mr. Sandeep for assisting me in drafting of the thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank all my friends who were important to the successful realization of thesis as well as expressing my apology that I could not personally mention everyone by name.

Ashu Malhan