ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I find it as a privilege to record my deep sense of gratitude and heartfelt sincere thanks to my esteemed and worthy guide and Supervisor Dr. Ashutosh Kumar, Dept of Political Science, for his inspiring guidance, vital suggestions, constructive criticism, keen interest and constant supervision throughout the work which led to the successful completion of this research.

I also express my deep gratitude to Prof. Bhupinder S. Brar and Dr Ronki Ram, both from the Punjab University who offered valuable suggestions for this study. I greatly benefited from their scholarly guidance and wholehearted assistance. My gratitude to the faculty member of the Department namely Dr. Sanjay Chaturvedi, Dr. Deepak K. Singh, Dr. Pampa Mukherjee, Ms. Navjot, Ms. Janaki Srinivasan. My sincere thanks to Dr. K.K. Kailash for reading the final draft of my thesis.

I am overwhelmed with the support I got from the non-teaching staff of the Department of Political Science especially Shri Sohan Lal Sharma (Office Incharge), Paramjit Singh (librarian) Seven, Hans Raj.

I am also thankful to the library staff of the A. C. Joshi library and the Digital library for their help in providing the required information.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my wonderful parents. It was the undying love and support of my father and my mother that I had been able to complete the project. It was their blessings, which gave me the hope and strength to carry on even in difficult times.

Special thanks to my wonderful friends, who helped me in every possible way and made my stay in this city extremely pleasant. I will never forget the assistance of my colleagues especially to mention my dearest friends: Sunil, Babu, Rajnish Sanyal, Parmjit and all others.

Above all, I am thankful to the Almighty God who made me feel His presence through constant companionship and being there as my friend and mentor. His unwavering affection and constant inspiration imbued in me self confidence, ability and strength to complete this research work.

I hereby declare that this Research study is a result of my own work and effort. It has not been presented in part or in whole to any institution or organization for the award of any merit. All sources of information used have been duly acknowledged.

Last but not the least, I appreciate and thank all those who contributed either directly or indirectly to this work. I say thank you to you all and may God bless you. I wish to state that all shortcomings, omissions of this study, are entirely my own responsibility.

Kulwinder Paul