Acknowledgements

A debt of gratitude to my research guide, Dr. N. B. Ramachandra, Reader, Department of Studies in Zoology, University of Mysore, whose enthusiasm and unconditional support made this dream a reality. I admire you sir for your ideas, never say die attitude and your valuable guidance. I am grateful that you always made yourself accessible throughout the research period and always led by example. I am also grateful to you for your encouragement, for having faith in me and providing me with a free hand to experiment and analyze.

I express my sincere thanks to the present and the former chairmen of Department of Studies in Zoology, Board of Studies in Zoology and members of colloquium and doctoral colloquium committee, University of Mysore for their encouragement and providing me with the necessary facilities to carry out my work. I also thank officers of University of Mysore for permit and complete this work in Department of Studies in Zoology.

I am grateful to all my teachers, Prof. H. A. Ranganath, Prof. Prakash R. Naik, Prof. S. M. Yamakynamaradi, Prof. S. N. Hegde, Prof. S. R. Ramesh, Prof. V. A. Vijayan, Prof. Shivabasavaiah, Dr. H. N. Yajurvedi, Dr. B. V. Shyamala, Dr. M. Bhagya and Mrs. S. S. Malini for their valuable guidance and encouragement.

I profusely thank Dr. B. Krishnamurthy and his team, Cheluwamba Hospital; Dr. D. Narayanappa and his team, J. S. S. Hospital and Dr. S. C. Karat and his team, CSI Holdsworth Memorial Hospital and also all the Doctors in Department of Pediatrics and the Incharge of Medical Record Section of the three hospitals for providing me with blood samples of the patients and assisting me during my research work. I also sincerely thank all my patients and their relatives for their cooperation in this study.

I thank Dr. Zareen Patel, Genetic Research Center (ICMR), National Institute for Research in Reproductive Health, Mumbai, who was kind enough to provide facility to carry out FISH work in her lab. I also thank Aruna D'Souza, Shiny and Shyla for their timely help, support and encouragement. I also thank Dr. Babu Rao, Mrs. Seema and others at Institute of Immunohaematology (ICMR), Mumbai, for giving me first hand training in cytogenetics and FISH technique and providing me with necessary guidance which formed the base of my research work.

I thank Dr. Seshadri, Mrs. Seema and others at Low Level Radiation Studies Section, Baba Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Mumbai; Dr. Arun Kumar, Department of Molecular Reproduction.
in Development and Genetics, IISc, Bangalore and his student Ms. Shoma for the co-operation and immense help extended to me for the molecular work.

I am grateful to Dr. Vidu Garg, USA for providing me the positive control DNA samples of heart defect patient and his valuable advice during my research.

I thank, Dr. Nagaraj, USA and Dr. G. Mahesh, USA for providing me all the valuable references required for my research work.

I thank, Ms. Pushpa Saviour, my good friend and colleague for being critical through out my research work, which helped me to refine my work and make it better. I thank my good friend Ivan for being their always for me during my M.Sc. days as well as during my research and also all my friends Hemanth, Hema, Kiran, Tanu, Divya, Sangeeta, Chethana, Shashinarayan and Haripriya for their moral support and encouragement. I thank all my colleagues Urmila, Harsha, Shilpa, Aruna, Vimala, Satish, Chaya, Vasudeva, Maduranath, Venkatesh, Deviprasad, Ranjini, Sowmya and to all my research colleagues of Department of Studies in Zoology for congenial and friendly atmosphere in the lab and for their timely help in their own way during my Ph. D work. I also thank all the non-teaching staff, Department of Studies in Zoology for their cooperation during my research work.

I express my deep sense of gratitude for the patience, cooperation, inspiration and sacrifice of my family members, without which this dream would have been a distant reality. Thank you Daddy, Mummy and Suvi for your bearing my tantrums and me and for your unconditional love, kind support and encouragement.

I am grateful to my Aai, Papa, Rani, Atya, Kaka, Mikhail and Joe for their patience, cooperation, inspiration, moral support and encouragement without which this work would not have seen light of the day.

With all my heart, I thank my dear husband Harsh, who is a constant inspiration right from the start of my research. His technical advice and other forms of aid generously provided by him have immensely helped me to complete my work with this pace. Thank you Harsh, you always remain essential in more ways than I can enumerate here.

I thank Mrs. Poornima Ramachandra, Sharath R, and Sannidhi R, for the encouragement and best wishes. Finally, I apologize all those whom I have missed out. I thank one and all who have been directly or indirectly involved in making this research work a success.

Smita R.