My pride, praise and perfection belong to my adored grandparents, Late Sh. Parkash Chahal and Late Smt. Charan Kaur for their great inspiration and blessings. My grandparents during his life always bestowed upon me their blessings, endowed me with strength and fortitude and directed me toward right path. Their moral boosting advises and everlasting encouragement always sustained me towards my destination. I bow my head in reverence to them for heightening my attitude to go ahead in life.

Indeed the words to my command are not adequate either in form or spirit to convey my depth of feelings of gratitude to my renowned supervisor Dr. Jatinder Kaur, Assistant Professor, Department of Botanical and Environmental Sciences, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar and co-supervisor, Dr. Yogesh B. Pakade. Their able guidance, constant supervision, keen interest and moral support which they extended to me time to time are gratefully acknowledged.

Heartfelt thanks are due towards Dr. Satwinderjeet Kaur, Head, Dr. Adarsh Pal Vig and Dr. Saroj Arora, Former Heads, Department of Botanical and Environmental Sciences, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, for providing me a platform to establish my research work and giving me an opportunity to accomplish my goal.

I am thankful to Dr. (Mrs.) Avinash Nagpal, Professor, Department of Botanical and Environmental Sciences, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar for providing me full hearted support to fulfill my dream. I am gratefully acknowledged to Dr. G. S. Virk, Professor, Department of Botanical and Environmental Sciences, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar for time to time help.

Also, I am very grateful to Dr. A. K. Thukral, Professor, Department of Botanical and Environmental Sciences, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar for his help in the statistical analysis of the data. I am also indebted to Prof. Renu Bhardwaj, Professor, and Dr. A. S. Soodan, Associate Professor, Department of Botanical and Environmental Sciences, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar for their constant help during my research work.
I am thankful to Dr. Rajinder Kaur, Assistant Professor and Er. Bhupinderpal Singh, Programmer, Department of Botanical and Environmental Sciences, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar for collection of the soil samples during the experimental work. I am also acknowledged to the entire faculty of Department of Botanical and Environmental Sciences for helping me one or the other way. I cannot forget to thank our technical and non-teaching staff especially Mr. Arun Agnihotri, Mr. Baldev Singh and all Mali staff of Botanical Garden for their technical assistance during my field and lab work.

It would be vain if I forget to thank my seniors Mrs. Rajneet Kaur Soodan, Maninder Kaur, Dipakshi Sharma, Mrs. Gurveen Kaur, Ashita Sharma and Mandeep Kaur for their auspicious company during tense hours. I will always be grateful to them for being cooperative all the time and for the healthy discussions during my research work.

My eternal gratitude goes to my friends and labmates Savinder, Saraswati, Harsimran, Navdeep, Sandip, Vaneet, Simerpreet, Rajwant and Jagdeep for their moral boosting advices and lovely gossips during tea breaks.

Words cannot express the profound sense of respect, which I possess for my bestowed friends, Ravi Shankar, Lakhvir Jhally, Ranjeet Singh and Kirandeep Kaur, whose inspiration, encouragement and moral support always motivated me to excel in my field.

My words would be incomplete if I will let pass to acknowledge all the research fellows of the department for being available all the time for their noble suggestions and worthy ideas.

I am also obliged to the University Grants Commission for providing me Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship.

I can never forget the endless affection of my little brother and sisters for always being with me during all crests and troughs of my life. The indebted help and support provided by my Parents and Mama ji cannot be easily acknowledged. Their everlasting support during entire phases of my life and dedication towards work always provoked me to move forward. I will always be grateful to Almighty God for giving me such fastidious and wonderful Parents.

Vanita Chahal