Several remarkable persons and institutions of academic excellence have contributed to this research study directly and indirectly without whose support, encouragement and motivation this body of work would not have been completed.

First and foremost, I am deeply indebted and grateful to my research supervisor, Dr. Praful Godkar, for the guidance, support, and motivation provided by him at all stages of the Ph.D. research.

I would like to express my respect and deep gratitude to Prof. Dr. S B Mujumdar, Chancellor, SIU for providing a constant urge to follow the vision of Symbiosis and Dr. Vidya Yeravdekar, Pro Chancellor, SIU for engaging discussions and motivation; for continuing my research. I wish to place on record my heartfelt gratitude to the authorities of Symbiosis International University for permitting and guiding me to carry out the research.

I consider it as a great honor to have been part of Faculty of Health and Biological Sciences, under the eminent leadership of Dr. Rajiv Yeravdekar, Dean, Faculty of Health and Biological Sciences, SIU. I will always be thankful for the kind words of advice and continuous support in steering my work to fruition.

The learning experience has been rewarding, for which I am indebted to Lt. Gen. Dr. M A Tutakne, Maj. Gen Dr. V.W. Tilak, Dr. Abhijeet Deshpande, Dr. Sharvari Shukla, Dr. Urvashi Rathod and Dr. Sanjay Pohekar. It was truly a memorable journey and I would sincerely like to express my gratitude to all my Symbiosis colleagues, my fellow peer professionals and my students for their generous support in this path.

It is my lovable parents, Mrs. Anita and Mr. Sanjeev Pawar and parents’ in-law, Mrs. Kamal and Mr. Dhanajirao Jadhav; without their constant unconditional affection, support and blessings, I would not have achieved this milestone.

This thesis would not have been possible without the unstinted enthusiasm of my husband Prof. Jagdish Jadhav, for being a stabilizing factor, mentor and guide, constantly
motivating and supporting me in this endeavor. A special thanks to my children Ajinkya and Anushka for making life appear so uncomplicated with their sheer energy, humor and rock-solid support, and my sisters Shivali and Sayali for encouraging me.

This work is a dedication to all my teachers who helped me to learn. To those persons, who I cannot acknowledge here in all sincerity and humility, thank you.

Sammita Jagdish Jadhav

Date: