This thesis could not have been completed, without the generous help, active support, constant encouragement and creative contribution of various persons. It is my duty to acknowledge them all.

First and foremost, I feel profoundly indebted to laborious, dynamic and generous supervisor, Dr. Rajinder Singh Sandhu, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Guru Nanak Dev University, who is constant source of inspiration and admirer for writing of this thesis. Despite his multifarious engagements, he made himself available round the clock to me for unfailing help, valuable guidance, superb suggestions and constructive criticism. To work under his supervision and guidance has not only been a great learning process, but also a privilege for me.

I express my deepest gratitude to Professor, Kuldip Singh, Department of Political Science, who continuously encouraged and support to complete my doctoral work and made very precious suggestions from time to time, which led my research in right direction and finish it within time.

I am very grateful to my teachers Professor, Jagrup Singh Sekhon, HOD and Mr. Harmeet Singh, Sr. Assistant Professor. I am also thankful to Dr. Satnam Singh Deol and Dr. Harpreet Kaur, faculty members of the Department of Political Science. It would be incomplete if I fail to express my heartiest gratitude to Late Prof. Gurnam Singh, who sowed seeds of education in my life.

My sincere appreciation and thanks are due to the Librarians, especially Mr. Ramesh Sharma, Department of Political Science and Bhai Gurdas Library, Guru Nanak Dev University, Baring Union Christian College, Batala (my working place). I extend my sincere thanks to the library staff of Punjabi University, Patiala; Punjab University, Chandigarh; Jawaharlal Nehru University; Delhi University, Delhi; H.P. University, Shimla; Teen Murti; Sapru House; and Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi.
I am especially beholden to my colleagues, Dr. Rajni Bala, Dr. R.K. Gulati and Ms Harvinder Kaur for invaluable support, assistance and their insightful comments on the work.

I do not find any suitable words for my beloved wife, Viney Kumari, my parents and family members, who showed great patience and always stood with me like a rock. It is their emotional, spiritual and moral support, which made my task easy to complete the study. A tragedy struck during my doctoral research, my mother-in-law Veena Devi Uppal unfortunately and unexpectedly passed away, who always dreamt her son-in-law grow in leaps and bound. The series of my gratitude would be incomplete if I forget to thank for inspirational and motivational support of Mrs Kuljit Kaur and Mrs Inderjit Sandhu.

I had consulted my work with several persons specially Iqbal Singh, Nirmal Singh, Gurpreet Singh and Pradeep Kaur, who were kind enough to render their services whenever, wherever I desired. I sincerely acknowledge the assistance of all of them.

Above all, it is the Almighty with whose grace, I have moved through this venture.

(Lalit Kumar)