## Acknowledgment

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliments, or the smallest act of caring."

Dr. Leo Buscaglia

First and for most I am thankful to Allah Subhan Wa Taala for all he has provided me, a supportive family, fantastic best friends and friends in friendship garden and a good environment to go through my journey in completion of my Ph.D Everything I am is because of You.

Thanks to my lovely family, especially my first love (dad and mum) and my lovely siblings (Fati, Mina, Akram and Mujtaba and Morteza) for their unconditional love and support; you mean a lot to me, I love you and owe you a big time. Thanks for all your relentless faith in me, your sacrifice and lifetime of love that allowed me to pursue my every dream. Thank you for giving me the confidence to never give up. I hope I have made you as proud of me as I am of you. Thanks for being the wind beneath my wings and standing by my side always.

I wish to particularly thank my advisor Prof. Dr. Saedah Siraj whose faith in me and encouragement has been most helpful throughout this process. She taught me how to deal with the hardship of the Ph.D and its obstacles. Her motherly hugs, smile and words always enlightened my days.

Special thanks go to my dearest buddy *Rana* whom I consider as my fourth sister. You have been a wonderful, special truly unique sister. You have dedicated immeasurable time, energy, and patience to me as we have journeyed through this passage in our study life and completion of our studies. Thanks for the countless and much-needed hours on the telephone. Rana you don't know how much it means to me when you called me like my own family did and you worry for my well being whether from overseas or in Malaysia, I have lost count on that. Your sisterhood and friendship is one of the greatest gifts I have ever received. Let me salute to our shared laughter and tears throughout our friendship journey and our study time since 2002, May Allah provide us the chance to continue this friendship till our grandchildren generation and even more. Amin. Your sisterhood touched my heart deeply and I dearly love you.

My debt is equally great to *Erkan* (**Eko**) a wonderful person and my dear and best friend. You are the kindest person I have ever met and yet another flower from Allah's garden in my life that shared and graced me with your unconditional encouragement, excessive care, kindness, patience and sometimes bitter truth during the time that i needed the most. Whether the sky of my life was shiny or cloudy, in sadness or happiness, you have been there for me. Eko you taught me numerous lessons that changed my vision a lot. I wish Allah (SWT) will grant me the chance to repay your kindness. Eko, words are not enough to express my gratitude toward you, just to tell you that your friendship footprints are deep in my heart and you are constantly in my heart and my mind. Hvala puno eko....

I would be remiss if I did not mention the constant support that **Dr. Lawrence Aeria** and **Dr. Chua Yan Piaw** provided me. Two fantastic individuals who taught me a lot, their patience, help, sacrifice and unconditional help really touched my heart. For without their mentoring and continued encouragement, I would not have been able to accomplish this journey. They are true professionals and the kind of educators that education needs so desperately. Their mentoring of me and of others truly does make social changes in education and in life. I just wanted to say thank you and may God bless you both.

I would like to take this chance to extend my thanks to **Prof. Dr. Mahmoud Moghavvemi** for all his support, encouragement and his brotherly words which always enlightened the unknown road ahead of me. A very big salute to you Prof. thanks for your constant support and guidance whenever I needed it.

To Prof. Dr. Zlatko Kovacic who guided me constantly without any hesitation. I have to mention that his articles were one of the initial steps which inspired me to do my current study. Thank you so much Prof. for all your support and prompt reply regardless of the time difference between the two countries. I wish one day I can treat my students the same way you have treated me.

To my lecturers(Mrs.Arfa, Mrs.Akhlaghi, Mrs. Mohseni and Mrs. Marandi) and their students in Iran, both participants in this research and those who have otherwise inspired me and continue to inspire me to complete my study – thank you for your enthusiasm, your dedication, and for sharing your stories. You have given me far more than you realize, and I am truly grateful that God has provided me the chance to be your student before. A special thank you to Prof. Dr. Aini Hassan; you have helped me in so many ways. My thanks also go to Dr. Dinana who always inspires me with her words her assistance and specially her lovely smile.

To my entire friends who have seen me through many things in life and have been there to push me to new limits. Their encouragement has allowed me accomplish this study and endeavor. To Reihaneh for knowing exactly what I'm going through-your support is a most magical gift. To Edina for her support and help whenever I need to stay till midnight in the lab to finish my work during the last few months of my study and for her kindness. To Rashidan, for editing my work since the first day I have started my Ph.D. To Zuhana for her constant care, love and honesty. To Huda for your understanding, love and care you have spared me, especially for that day you shared my moments. To Nor Zihan for all her purity and sincerity. To Ali, Dr. Chin, Nasser and Abdul Latif for all their wonderful understanding through our journey for completion of our study. You all have been a great support group and sounding board for me. May Allah bless you all.

To all the people who have graced me with their moral support and encouragement during my study in the doctoral program, I want to say I appreciate your support and care and may Allah bless you.

Zahra Naimie

Dedicated to Eko

For your Purity & kind heart

Posvecujem Eku

Za tvoju cestitost i veliko srce