ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I take this opportunity to record my deep sense of gratitude to Prof. Balgovind Baboo, whose guidance and supervision have been invaluable for shaping this thesis. Not only did he initiate me to this topic but provided me huge study materials required for this work.

I owe equally a deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Rajkishor Meher at NKC Centre for Development Studies, Bhubaneswar for his comments and suggestions on the first draft of the thesis. He has been continuously supportive in the fieldwork and statistical interpretation of the field material.

I am very grateful to my colleagues in the department who inspired me to finish my Ph.D work. In particular, I am obliged to Prof. Rita Ray for sensitizing me on gender issues and inspiring me for the completion of the thesis in time.

I also express my indebtedness to my parents for their contribution in shaping my academic carrier and to my parents-in-law for inspiration and support which enabled me to complete this work.

Sasmita, my wife, not only typed the first draft of the thesis but also she has been a witness and shareholder in my ordeals in the different stages of the work. My tiny daughter, Misti, has been a silent spectator to my long hours on the table and I feel guilty of neglecting her in her early childhood.

Finally I thank all my respondents in the field without whose cooperation and selfless support this thesis would not have seen the light of the day.

Rabindra Garada
Senior Lecturer
P.G. Department of Sociology
Utkal University
Vani Vihar

Bhubaneswar