ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is with a feeling of intense pleasure that I express my sense of profound gratitude to my learned and experienced guide, Dr. Lakshahira Das, Retired Professor and Head, Department of Education, Gauhati University, whose learned guidance, fine suggestions and affable treatment enabled me to carry out and submit this study. For a busy person like Baidow, it was extremely gracious for her to always be ready to help me at all times. Such an helpful approach from the guide is a great encouragement in the field of research. I can not adequately express the deep gratitude that I owe to her inspiration and guidance in the preparation of the thesis. She kept high my drooping spirit and alive the flame of my diminishing enthusiasm.

This research work involved many months spent in various libraries in Delhi and Guwahati. I extend my thanks to the library staff of the Parliament House Library, The Teen Murti Library, The Jawaharlal Nehru University Library and the Indian Council of Social Science Research of Delhi, the Gauhati University Library and ISCD Centre, Guwahati for their assistance in providing me with the necessary materials.

I am also greatly indebted to my mother Mrs. Asiya Rasul, for her encouragement and blessings, to my friend Dr.
K.K. Roychoudhury for his inspiration and moral support and to both my daughters Kasturi and Krishna, who silently and patiently bore up my absence from home and thus provided me ample time to donate to my studies, in preparing the thesis.

Through this column I also wish to extend my sincere gratitude and thanks to all the institutions, who have helped me directly or indirectly to meet widows and innumerable respondents who co-operated with me and contributed to this study. I am also indebted to various authors whose books and articles I consulted during the preparation of the thesis.

Lutfun Rasul Saikia