ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

At the very outset, I should like to record here my deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Dilip C. Nath, Reader, Department of Statistics, G.U., who first stimulated my interest in the study of fertility and very kindly agreed to supervise my research work. But for his readiness and sustained encouragement, completion of this thesis work would not have been possible.

I am equally indebted to Prof. B.N. Bhattacharya, ISI, Calcutta, Dr. A. Pandey, IIPS, Bombay, Prof. K.C. Land, Duke University, North Carolina and Prof. B.C. Kalita, Head of the Department of Mathematics, G.U., for their valuable comments and suggestions at different stages of this research work.

I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to Prof. H.C. Choudhury, Head of the Department of Statistics, G.U., Dr. P.C. Sarma, Ex-Principal, Pandu College and Dr. S. Barman, Principal, Pandu College for kindly allowing me to pursue my research work.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. J. Medhi, Prof. Emeritus, G.U., Prof A.C. Borthakur, Prof. H.K. Baruah, Dr. Pranita Sarma, Dr. L.C. Choudhury of Gauhati University and Prof. Nani Kalita, who are my constant source of encouragement and inspiration.

I consider it as my solemn duty to express deep gratitude to all those women who responded to the questionnaire during the field survey by supplying their valuable information, without which this work would have been impossible.

I gratefully acknowledge the help rendered by Dr. P. Talukdar, USIC, G.U. and Mrs. L. Banerjee of IASST, Khanapara, in computing some of the results in connection with this thesis. I am also greatly indebted to those who offered their assistance in typing this thesis.

However, a special word of thanks is due to my son Rajeeb and daughter Debbie, without whose sacrifice and co-operation at every crucial moment this thesis may not have seen the light of the day.

20 Jan 1997

(Giti Goswami)