ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely thankful to Professor Vijay Kochar, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad for his valuable guidance, untiring attention, kind encouragement and constructive criticism at all stages of my research work. I liberally used his personal library which has a rich collection of journals, articles, books, reports, bibliography etc. in the field of medical sociology and anthropology.

Dr. Chandrasekhar Bhat, Reader, Department of Sociology, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad offered his valuable suggestions and comments whenever I approached him with my problems. I am thankful to him. I express my gratitude to all the faculty members of the department of Sociology and Anthropology for their encouragement in completion of my work.

I am grateful to Professor Iqbal Narain, Member - Secretary, Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi for his support and inspiration in completion of my work. Dr. Susheela Bhan, Executive Director, ICSSR, New Delhi encouraged me to do research in the field of medical sociology which is fast growing as a distinctive sub-area in the discipline of Sociology in India. I am deeply indebted to her. I express my gratitude to my seniors - Dr. Prem Singh, Dr. Kashmiri Singh and Dr. M.M. Mathur, Directors, ICSSR for their assistance and understanding. My colleagues - Dr. K.K. Siddh, Dr. K.D. Gaur, Shri Prahlad Singh and Shri A. Rahman helped me at various stages of my work. I am thankful to all of them.
Mr. Durga Prasad stayed with me in the field and assisted me in collection of data. Shri M. Jagannatha Rao, Sarpanch, Viravada made my stay comfortable in his house and helped me during my preliminary field explorations in village Virava. Similarly, Shri Peda Kapu also made my stay pleasant in village Siriwada during my pretesting of all the questionnaires. The doctors and staff of PHC at Rangampeta, the study village, extended their full cooperation in collection of my data. My respondents answered my innumerable queries patiently even at odd hours. I am extremely thankful to all of them. My well wishers, friends and colleagues helped me either directly or indirectly in various ways. I am also thankful to them.

I am grateful to the Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi for providing me a fellowship to do my doctoral work.

I am indebted to my parents and other family members who encouraged me and stood by me at the time of crisis and helped me in innumerable ways.

My wife, Rajyashri and daughter, Hima Priya suffered my negligence silently and willingly and without their cooperation and appreciation, I could not have completed my work. I am thankful to them.

I extend my thanks to Shri Suresh Chander for carefully typing my thesis with speed and accuracy.