ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It gives me great pleasure to thank the many people who have supported me in this endeavor. First I thank my supervisor Prof. B P Sanjay for being an extraordinary mentor. His guidance towards critical thinking, strategies to navigate the academic process and insistence towards quality has provided me the grit and confidence to meet the rigor of this field based study. I can never thank him and his family enough for providing personal support to me during various stages of my research work.

I am thankful to Prof. Vinod Pavarala and Prof. Ramachandraiah for critically analyzing my research through its formative stages as members of my Doctoral Research Committee that helped me grow as a scholar. Their advice and encouragement is much appreciated.

I will remain grateful to Prof. Mihir Kanti Chaudhuri, Vice-chancellor, Tezpur University, for creating the scope for me to take up this research program and his consistent encouragement. I also thank the Indian Council of Social Science Research and the Centre for Economics and Social Sciences for providing me with a Doctoral Fellowship that covered part of my research expenditure.

My sincere thanks go to Mr. Vasuki Belavadi for being an extraordinary friend and colleague who inspired me to take up this research. I thank him for responding to all
my small and big distress calls in managing academic and institutional support while at University of Hyderabad.

I thank Dr. Kanchan Kumar Malik and Lt. Mr. C V S Sharma for providing new insights into my work during the various formal and informal discussion sessions at the department.

I am grateful to Mr. Tialiba Imchen, Ms. Sashi Maijan and Mr. Yanger for accompanying me during my fieldwork at Nagaland and introducing me to Naga culture, cuisine and hospitality. Without their support it would have been impossible for me to discern and appreciate the various shades of Naga culture that form an integral part of my research experience.

My gratitude goes to the officials of NIC and IL&FS for their time and cooperation. Special thanks to Mr. Rubayat Ali, Mr. Bani Kanta Bharali, Mr. Medikrue, Mr. Mukunda Pujari and Mr. Chuba for helping me with official data and appointments at Delhi, Assam and Nagaland.

Accomplishing this work would not have been possible without the assistance of my family and friends who have been an incredible source of support during the course of my research. Thanks to my relatives at Guwahati - Boromama, Mamimoni, Chumki, and at Dimapur - Dadu, Dida, Koli, Mili, I had a place to stay and access to home food during my fieldwork in Assam and Nagaland.
My heartfelt appreciation goes to Mr. Subhash Bhatt and his family at Kohima for providing all the logistical support during my travel there.

Special thanks to Meera, Amma and Chotu for making me a part of their family and giving me the comfort of having a home away from home at Hyderabad.

Thanks to my friends at the university hostel Bhaswati, Rumpa, Vasudhara and Tulika for all the fun and enjoyment that kept me going at troubled times. Special thanks to Lavanya and Dharshani for being a constant source of inspiration and for teaching me to have faith in myself.

It does not seem possible to adequately thank my family. My father Mr. N G Chakrabarti, my mother Mrs. Jaba Chakraborty, my mother-in-law Mrs. Krishna Chakravarty and my younger brother Ambar Chakraborty have supported and encouraged me constantly throughout the process of my thesis writing. I am grateful to them for always being by my side and having faith in me and my work. And finally, a big thanks goes to my husband Himadri who has been close to me during the final part of this endeavor and made my life change for the better. His constant encouragement and support has helped me put in my best effort towards completion of this work.