Acknowledgements

It is a privilege to be able to thank all those who helped in carrying out this research work. My supervisor Dr. Gayatri Goswami, Associate Professor in the department of Economics, Gauhati University, Guwahati, took enormous interest in the progress of this work. She has guided me throughout my work sparing all the time required and provided me with necessary advice and direction. Without her help and encouragement, it would not have been possible to complete this research work.

I would like to express my gratitude to the authority and stuff of K.K, Handique Library, Gauhati University, Guwahati, JNU Library, New Delhi, and IIT Library Guwahati, Census of India (Guwahati), Economics and Statistics Department, Government of Assam, NRHM Office Goalpara. I was immensely benefitted from the SPSS workshops of Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Kolkata. The 11th Conference of Indian Association for Social Sciences and Health held in Chennai gave me an opportunity to exchange my ideas on health economics with number of experts in the field. Their valuable suggestions enrich this study.

Prof. Madhurjya Prasad Bezbarua has been a constant source of inspiration and confidence in this research work. His valuable suggestions have given the right direction to this study. I am indebted to him. I am grateful to Prof. Nisar Ahmed Barua, Head of the Department of Economics, Gauhati University for his advice and guidance since the beginning of the work. For valuable suggestions in different stages of the present study, I am grateful to Dr. Dharmendra Nath. I am thankful to Prof. Archana Sarma, Dr. Sakia Khan, for their valuable suggestions. My colleague at Dudhnoi College, Dr. Biren Bhuyan and Dr. Minati Choudhury inspired me. I offer my sincere gratitude to them.

I am indebted to my father Mr. Kanak Chandra Sarma and mother Mrs. Kunjalata Devi for their inspiration. I acknowledge my son Aaranyak and Dr. Subhash Barman for their support and cooperation. While working for this dissertation, Mrittika Hajong has helped me immensely, I am thankful to her. Finally, I express my sincere gratitude to all those who directly or indirectly helped in completing my research work.

Dipanjali Devi