Acknowledgements

I am unable to find appropriate words to embody solicitously my true emotions and deep sense of gratitude to my erudite and revered guide Dr. K.C. Sharma, Professor Department of Economics, Himachal Pradesh University Centre for Evening Studies, Shimla for his invaluable and benevolent guidance, sustained encouragement, keen interest, deep concern and vigilant supervision without which it would not have been possible for me to steer the course of this investigation and present a final shape to this thesis.

I am highly indebted to Prof. A.D.N. Vajpai, Honorable Vice- Chancellor, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla for the peaceful academic atmosphere he has maintained in the campus which has helped in the completion of my work.

It is my privilege to express my sincere thanks to Prof. Aprana Negi Chairperson, Department of Economics, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla, for providing necessary facilities to carry out the present investigations. I extend my sincere thanks to Prof. D.S.Thakur, Prof. N.K.Sharda, Prof. Minakshi Sooden, Prof. Sikender Kumar and Mr. N.S. Bist Associate Professor for their help at every stage with their expert advice.

Special mention is merited to recognize my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. (Mrs.) Anita Sharma, Associate Professor in English, Akshika Sharma and Rishika Sharma for their deep affectionate behavior, valuable guidance and encouragement during the course of present research work.

I specially want to thank Mr. Harjinder Singh, Vikrant Singh and Karan Singh for their help and co-operation.

I am grateful to Dr. H.S. Jamwal (Associate Professor Mathematics), my sister & brother in law Mrs. Sushma Jamwal & Sh. P.S. Jamwal and my friend Dr. Joginder Saklani (Assistant Professor Political Science) for their motivation, inspiration and encouragements in my life.

I specially want to thank my friends and colleagues Dr. Sunil Kumar,
Dr. Rajeev Rana, Dr. Kuldeep Barwal, Sh. Raj Kamal, Assistant Professor Rakesh Negi, Assistant Professor Dinesh Patial, Assistant Professor Neeraj Kumar, Assistant Professor Rakesh Kumar, Associate Professor S.S. Thakur and all the staff member of Govt. College Sarkaghat for their encouragements and guidance.

I am grateful to library staff of H.P. University, ICDEOL Library, Agro-Economic Research Centre Library; Indian Institute of Advance Study Library, Shimla; Himachal Pradesh Directorate of Economics and Statistics Library; Himachal Pradesh Secretariat Library. I would like to acknowledge and appreciate the co-operation received from all staff members of Department of Economics, H.P. University.

I specially want to thank my friends Prakesh Chand, Gagan Pandit, Sunil and Uma Thakur, Rishi Thakur, Rakesh Sharma, Kamal Thakur, Shamsher Singh Thakur, Rajesh Thakur, Puspraj, Shaini, Vikas for their help and co-operation.

Overwhelmingly, I devote this unpretentious effort to my parents Smt. Sarvi Thakur and Sh. Kamar Singh Thakur, my brother Sh. Manoj Thakur, my mother-in-law Mrs. Urmila Thakur and other family members. It was their love, affection, encouragement and inspiration that have enabled me to come up with all worthy achievements. I would also like to appreciate my beloved wife, Mrs. Seema Thakur, for her adorable support, inspiration and encouragement. These lines would be incomplete without mentioning the inspiration and motivation provided by my loving kids Keshav Thakur, Komal Thakur and Alisha Thakur.

I thank all the respondents who helped me to understand their views about socio-economic profiles. They gave me love and respect and were always ready to participate and share information with me.


(Vinod Kumar)