ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research work would not have been completed without the favourable blessings of my supervisor, Prof. Ajay Patnaik, who patiently put finishing touches to my work. Really, his efforts have supported my endeavour to complete this thesis.

The staff at JNU Library, JODA Library, UNDP office and ICSSR (for their timely fellowship), has been very cooperative and I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to them. Writing a thesis is an endurance test, a major milestone of life. Fortunately, I had friends whose goodwill and cheer made this journey easy. I would like to bestow special thanks to Aradhana (TONY), Shailu and Bhagaban who were very encouraging and boosted my morale with whom I shared many a joyful moment at JNU. P.J.Nath, who helped me to redefine my attitude to life and work, deserves my special thanks. Thanks are also due to Archanadidi, Sanjay, Deepu, Jhuna, Chitta, Suresh, Gopal, Umanathan and Usha K.B. to whom I will always be grateful for their constant encouraging support.

Finally, to the source of my strength and inspiration, my mother, who unfailingly helped me to dream, this study would never have been accomplished. I am really indebted to her and to my family who believes in me.

I will always be indebted to Raju bhaiya for his meticulous typing work.

Mamta