ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I express my deep sense of gratitude to my esteemed supervisor Dr. Renuka Singh whose scholarly guidance, illuminating advice and constant supervision has inspired me in shaping this work. I extend my indebtedness to her for encouraging me to explore my potentialities and my inner strength. She has not only been a supervisor for me but has guided me in every step of my life. Her objective assessment and sincere advice has made me crave for knowledge and work honestly to achieve my goal with full devotion and dedication. Her intellectual prowess and thorough knowledge in the field of sociology has helped to delve deeply and develop new insights into social phenomena. There is no denying the fact that she is my role model because of the immense amount of patience and perseverance she portrays in all her endeavours.

I am indebted to Mama, Baba and my younger brother Vivek for supporting all my decisions and being there with me when I needed them the most. They have constantly encouraged me and their unconditional love and affection has helped me in overcoming all the hurdles. My heartfelt salutations to my father-in-law and mother-in-law who have departed for the heavenly abode.

My special and heartfelt thanks to my beloved husband Manoj for his all-time support and encouragement and without whom this work would not have been possible. I am thankful to him for all his love and affection and being with me in every step of my life. He has been my pillar of strength and has been my saviour solving all my problems and supporting me emotionally. I am thankful to him for being with me and supporting me throughout.

Special thanks to Jijaji (Mr. Sudhanshu Gupta) and Nitu Apa (Binita Das) for helping me throughout my fieldwork. They have not only helped me with meeting my respondents but have also made me comfortable in the field. Most of my meetings with the respondents were arranged by them. I am also thankful to
all my respondents for showing patience and providing me with relevant information. I also thank my Head of the Department, Dr. Kumud Ranjan who has helped me while formulating the questionnaire and giving me new insights and valuable advice. I also thank my brother-in-law Pankaj for helping me in my fieldwork and helping me to develop rapport with my respondents.

Hearty thanks to Dr. Indu Upadhyay, Dr. Purnima Saxena, Dr. Sanjay Saxena and Dr. Suman Jain for being such wonderful colleagues and friends. I also thank Pradeep, Subas, Nidhi, Lolly, Shivaniiditi and Sutanya, for encouraging me.

For the unwavering cooperation and help extended by the Library Staff of Central Library, JNU, Nehru Memorial Library (Teen Murti), Central Library, BHU, Vishwa Yuva Kendra, DSA Library, JNU and Jamia Millia Islamia Library I am immensely thankful.

Ellina Samantroy