ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the outset I express my heartfelt gratitude and indebtedness to my revered guide Dr. M.R. Narayana, Professor and Head, Economics Unit, ISEC under whose able supervision this work has been carried out. His valuable guidance, generous help, meticulous reading and editing, constant inspiration, and overall moral support made it possible for me to complete this work.

I owe my profound sense of gratitude to my Doctoral Committee members Prof. K.V Raju and Dr. K. Gayithri for their concern, efforts, valuable suggestions, and moral support to me since the beginning of my research work.

I sincerely acknowledge the valuable suggestions from the following persons at ISEC: Dr. Hemlata Rao, Dr. M. Mahadeva, Dr. Maathai, Mrs. B. P. Vani, Dr. Meenakshi Rajeev and Dr. Venkatachalam at various stage of my research not only in the capacity of panellists during the biannual progress seminar series conducted by the institute but also as and when I sought. I thank Prof. Ravi Kanbur for giving me valuable suggestions and encouragement in the capacity of panelists in various biannual seminars including pre submission seminar. I also thank all the participants of Bi-annual seminars at various stages of my research for their constructive suggestions.

I would like to express my deep sense of gratitude to Prof. Maria Saleth, Prof. Shashanka Bhide, Prof. A.S. Seetharamu, Prof. R.S. Deshpande, Prof. S.N. Sangita, Prof. D. Rajasekhar, Dr.S. Madheswaran and other faculty members of ISEC for their encouragement, and useful discussions during the course of my doctoral work.

I thank the former Directors of ISEC Prof. M. Govinda Rao and Prof. Gopal K. Kadekodi and the present Director Prof. N Jayaram for providing me valuable suggestions, support and encouragement while doing my research work.
I sincerely express my gratefulness to the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) and the Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) for providing me fellowship and an opportunity to pursue my doctoral studies.

I am thankful to Mr. H.N. Ranganathan, former Registrar, ISEC, and Mr. V. Ramappa, Accounts Officer, ISEC, for their help. I am grateful to the PhD Programme Co-ordinators (ISEC) at different points of time, and Mr. V.N. Venketesha for their support. I like to specially thank Mr. K.S. Narayana for copyediting the thesis.

I sincerely acknowledge the help and assistance received from Mr. Krishna Chandran and Mr. Satish Kamath in the computer centre and the members of Library staff of ISEC, especially Mr. T.B.R. Sharma, Mrs. K Leela, Kalyanappa, K. Venkatesh and S. Rajanna. A special word of thanks to Dr. H.K. Amarnath for his kind help extended to me in the capacity of the former data bank manager as well as at personal level.

It will be a great pleasure on my part to convey a love weted thanks to my friends Ramakrushna, Geethanjali, Rajib, Lija, Kshayama, Amal, Gagan, Mini, Deepti and Deepika, Sitakanta, Bhanu, Pravakar, Purna, Dukhi, Satyapriya, Satyasiba, Subodh, Pratyushna, Harsha, Raghu, Sridevi, Hrushi, Ananda, Pratiba, Bikash, Prasob, Venu, Sukumar, Geetanjoy, Subir, Krushna, Badri, Sachi and others for rendering me their kind help and moral support at different points of time. A special thanks to Ayan, PhD fellow IGIDR, for his timely helps whenever I sought for it.

I am beholden to my parents, my brother- Asit, and my wife Swarnamala for their constant moral support in fulfilling my dream of completing the Ph.D. thesis.

Ashish Dash