PREFACE

India is a country of continental dimensions with a very large population. It is very rich in resources. Different regions are at different stages of development. It has highly developed and very prosperous regions, but it also has backward and underdeveloped regions. Rail transport is the cheapest mass transportation system in the country. It has acted as a catalytic agent of economic development from the day the first train steamed off. For this reason, suitable new railway line projects have to be chosen for these backward and underdeveloped regions in the country.

In a developing country like India, with severe resource constraints, investment decisions have to be taken for different competing projects in various sectors of the economy. The decision has to be more on grounds of economic development than for reasons of financial viability. The Indian Railways, which occupy a strategic position in the transport network in our country are likely to retain this importance in future also till the per capita income and standard of living of masses rises to the level where individual transport becomes common.
I am particularly grateful to Dr D C Srivastava who has been my inspiration in completing this thesis. He took a great deal of pains in going through the manuscript, modifying it, improving it and finally bringing it to the present shape.

I also express my heart-felt thanks to Shri M K Saxena for his extensive help in the production of this thesis.

I am also thankful to Miss Kiran who worked very hard to print this thesis on computer in record time.

(A N SAKSENA)

New Delhi, December, 1986.

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