Acknowledgement

The completion of this research work would not have been possible without the contributions of a number of individuals whom I am indebted to.

I am grateful to Dr. Manoj Kumar Choudhury (Head and Associate Professor - Department of Business Administration, Gauhati University) for giving me the opportunity to pursue this Ph.D Program and the subsequent submission of my Thesis at the Department. His positive comments and suggestions during my PhD Program were quite inspiring.

I am indebted to Professor Munin Kakati (former Head, Department of Business Administration and Dean, Faculty of Management, Gauhati University) for providing me motivation and constructive suggestions during the period of my PhD Program.

My special thanks are reserved for my guide Dr. (Mrs) Rinalini Pathak Kakati, Associate Professor, Department of Business Administration, Gauhati University, to whom I owe deep and lasting gratitude for not only her advice, guidance and critical comments throughout the whole research work, but also for being extremely generous with her time and effort. She has provided me with valuable feedback and suggestions regarding synopsis writing, framing of the research methodology including research objectives, questions, hypotheses and questionnaire development and especially in a major way on the analysis part. As a person, she has provided me guidance, encouragement and motivation in the completion of my entire PhD Program in the midst of her busy schedule of both professional and family life.
I express my sincere gratitude to Dr Pradip Kumar Jain (Associate Professor, G.U.), Dr. (Mrs) Monoshree Mahanta (Senior Assistant Professor, G.U.), Shri Sameer Sarkar (Assistant Professor, G.U.), Shri Banajeet Changakoti (Assistant Professor, G.U.), Dr. U. R. Dhar (retired Professor, G.U.) and Shri Dipanjan Konwar (visiting faculty, G.U.) for their constructive motivations and suggestions in various forms during my research work.

I am indebted to Prof. Suren Talukdar (Retired Professor, Cotton College & Controller of Examinations, AIM), Prof. N.N. Sarma (Director, AIM), Shri Santikam Hazarika (Former Director, AIM), Shri N.C. Kalita (Administrative Officer, AIM), Dr. G.K. Sharma (Sr. Assistant Professor, AIM), Shri Sanjib Raj (Sr. Assistant Professor, AIM), Dr. Pratul Ch. Kalita (Assistant Professor, IIT-G), Mr Jamal Hussain (Faculty, AIM), Dr. (Mrs) Mreeshi Agarwal (Assistant Professor, AIM), Mrs Korobi Goswami (Assistant Professor, AIM), Dr. Mohd. Irfan Ullah (Assistant Professor, AIM), Dr. Sinmoy Goswami (Assistant Professor, AIM), Shri Chandan Bora (Academic Officer, AIM), Shri Kishore Hazarika (Programme Officer), Shri Manabendra Deka (Research Associate), Ms Himadri Phukan (Project Associate - World Bank), Ms Gayatree Barua (Project Associate - World Bank) and other members of the AIM family for their help in creating a very congenial atmosphere for the completion of my research work.

I am grateful to Dr Mukulesh Barua (Executive Director, Royal Group of Institutions & Royal School of Business), Dr. Tilak Ch. Das (Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, G.U.) Shri Rajdeep Deb (Assistant Professor, GIMT), Dr Neelanjana Deb (Associate Professor, GIMT), Ms Gitika Talukdar (Assistant Professor, GIMT), Mrs Sampurna Bhuyan (Assistant Professor, GIMT), Ms Junumoni Das (Personnel Manager,
GIMT), Shri Jasojit Debnath (Assistant Professor, Nagaland University), Dr Deepak Bhagat (Assistant Professor, N.E.H.U., Tura), Mrs Bobita Saikia, Mrs. Chayanika Senapati (Assistant Professor, KKHSOU), Dr. (Mrs) Smritisikha Barman Choudhury (Assistant Professor, KKHSOU), Dr (Mrs) Jonali Sharma (Assistant Professor, CMS-GCC), Mrs Roshmi Rekha Mahanta (Assistant Professor, CMS-GCC) Mrs Moitree Banerjee, Mrs Anubhuti Deorah (Research Scholar, Department of Business Administration, G.U.) and Surajit Chakraborty (Lab Assistant, Department of Business Administration, G.U.) for their help in various forms during my research work.

I also express my gratitude to Nripenda, Prabhatda, Badalda and other staff members of the Department of Business Administration, G.U. who provided me hospitality whenever I visited the Department.

I am indebted to my parents, who instilled in me the value of hard work, sincerity and good education. I also extend my special thanks to other family members for their overall moral support during my research work and especially to my wife for providing me assistance in the translation of the research Questionnaire from English to Assamese.

(Shazeed Ahmed)