ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The success of research work largely depends upon the person under whose guidance it is compiled, collated and completed. I have had the invaluable privilege of pursuing my research investigations under the able supervision of Dr. (Mrs.) Shalina Mehta, Professor, Department of Anthropology, Panjab University, Chandigarh, India. Her constant encouragement, illuminative guidance coupled with her indefatigable spirit, and always kind and sympathetic mannerisms not only made it possible to benefit from her helpful comments, but also aroused in me the habits of focused, clear thinking and incisive research.

I take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to Professor Dr. (Mrs.) Indu Talwar, Chairperson, Department of Anthropology, Panjab University, Chandigarh who was a great help to me in satisfying the administrative and academic exigencies of the research work.

Most sincerely, I express my gratitude to my mother, my husband and my family who were my steadfast supports all through the research programme. It was their encouragement, patience and unconditional love that gave me strength and enabled me to complete my research work. To them, my thanks are due for whatever little I have been able to achieve in life and learning. I would also like to thank my infant son, Ishaan, for his absolute acceptance of my long absence to complete the final stages of my research, with a fortitude and patience not found in one so young.

I would like to express my thanks to the ‘Panchayats’ of all the four field area villages, namely Rail Majra, Taunsa, Bannah and Asron for the help
provided in collecting the data. I also owe my thanks to health officials and block development officers for extending their cooperation. I am indeed grateful to all the respondents who spared their valuable time and very patiently responded to my research questions.

Lastly, I pay my humble and deep obeisance to the Almighty who gave me strength and resilience to complete this work.

Date: 16-12-2005
Place: Chandigarh

(Raminder Kaur Sodhi)