ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I am highly grateful to Almighty “God” who bestowed me with understanding, learning and brought me out of ignorance and illiteracy and led me to complete this research work.

Present study is the product of the interaction of a number of minds. Knowingly and unknowingly, many people have contributed to the completion of this study. Therefore, I earnestly thank to all those who have helped me in the pursuit of my research.

The present research work has reached its zenith with the constant help and encouragement from many people. First and foremost, with great pleasure and reverence, I express my deep sense of gratitude to Prof. Abdul Munir, Department of Geography, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, for his valuable guidance. His indefatigable zeal was a source of constant inspiration. His painstaking supervision and inspiring discussion has left an indelible imprint on my doctoral work. It has been indeed an extreme privilege and one of the most rewarding experiences of life to have been associated with persons of such caliber.

I am extremely thankful to Prof. Farasat Ali Siddiqui, Chairman, Department of Geography, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh for providing all the necessary facilities in the department.

My sincere thanks are due to the other faculty members of the department. I wish to express my gratitude to Dr. Mazhar Ali, GIS Specialist and Dr. Mohd. Taufique, Department of Geography, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

I wish to extend warmest thanks to Mr. Hameedur Rahman, GIS Specialist, Oman, for helping me in preparing maps through Geographical Information System (GIS) by which I was able to decorate the thesis.

I am very thankful to my seniors Dr. Jafar Ali and Dr. Rukhsana, Associate Professors, Aliah University, Kolkata, for solving the problems during data calculation and analysis.

I am also thankful to other faculty members of teaching and non-teaching staff of the department for their generous help extended directly and indirectly from time to time, related to their respective job pursuit. I record my appreciation for co-operation rendered by in-charge of seminar library of the department and central library of A.M.U., Aligarh, J.N.U., New Delhi, and B.H.U., Varanasi and staff of Census of India, New Delhi, Vikas Bhavan, Nagar Nigam and National Informatics Centre Aligarh.

My special thanks are reserved for my friends Mrs. Arshi Azmi, Mr. Mohd. Saleem Mir (D.U., Delhi), Mr. Nawaz Malik, Mr. Mohd. Abdul Wahid, Mr. Mohd. Taufiqul Islam (J.N.U., Delhi), Ms. Menka and Ms. Suman Lata.

No words can adequately express my gratitude to my family. I am beholden to my Father (Mr. Dau Dayal) and my mother (Mrs. Indira Gupta) for their encouragement and blessings. I am also very grateful especially to my sister Ms. Bhoomika Varshney, Research Scholar, B.H.U., Varanasi, My Brother, Mr. Virendra Kumar Varshney, IBM, New Delhi, and my uncle Mr. Atul Gupta, Chartered Accountant, Aligarh who enabled me to complete my work. Their steadfast support and endurance have helped me immensely.

Last but not the least, my deep appreciation are reserved to all those seniors, juniors, friends and relatives who remained my strength throughout and have made it possible to complete this research work. I thank to all the members and respondents who helped me in collecting the valuable information for carving out the present research work.

Deepika Varshney