Acknowledgements

First and above all, I praise Shri Shri Ramkrishna Paramhansha and Shridi Saibaba, for providing me this opportunity and granting me the capability to proceed successfully. I, indebted towards them for showers of blessings throughout this period of time for successful completion of present study.

First and foremost I am thankful to Department of Anthropology, University of Calcutta for giving me the opportunity to pursue this research work. I take this occasion to convey my heartfelt gratitude to my Research Guide Prof. Arup Ratan Bandyopadhyay for his supervision, advice and encouragement in every stage of my research. His insightful suggestions have helped me in generating new thoughts and carrying out my research successfully. Academic interactions with him since my Masters have helped me in shaping my research career. Without his all time guidance and encouragement this thesis would not have been possible.

From the core of my heart I am thankful to my parents Shri Joygopal Mukherjee and Smt. Krishna Mukherjee. Their love, warmth, constant support and inspiration have not only oriented me towards my research work but also given me a platform and confidence throughout to overcome all hurdles and face any challenge. It is for them that I have been able to reach this stage of life today. I am running short of words to express my heartiest feelings for them.

I would like to express my heartiest gratitude to all the participants for their sincere cooperation and generous help in collecting the data for this study.

I am thankful to Anthropological Survey of India for providing me an opportunity to carry out the present investigation. My utmost thanks to Mr. D. N. Pandey, Head of Office, AnSI, Kolkata for his important suggestions, inspiration and all time encouragements which have proved extremely useful for my work. I am really grateful to him for his help at any extreme moment. I am also grateful to Dr. Priyanka Singh and Dr. Jayanta Nayek for their valuable suggestions and supportive words.
My deepest gratitude goes to Dr. Venugopal PN for his intuitive suggestions, critical evaluation and statistical analysis in my work. Personal communication with him has helped me to develop my research ideas. I want to offer my heartiest thank to him who as a good friend, was always willing to help and give his best suggestions.

I am obliged to Dr. Malay Kumar Barman, North Bengal Medical College, for helping me collecting buccal smear sample of participants. Whenever I went to collect samples, his smiling face and supportive words made me feel better. In this context, I convey my sincere thank to Dr. Ranen Aich, Nil Ratan Sircar College and Hospital, for his invaluable help for collecting sample from breast cancer patients. A simple thank would be inadequate for them.

I would like to sincerely thank my teachers in Department of Anthropology, especially Prof. Subha Ray and Prof. Gopal Krishna Chakrabarty for their valuable comments and suggestions which have been helpful for the betterment of the thesis.

Here I would earnestly like to thank my sister Shree Bhattacharya for her presence and support in the crucial stage of my fieldwork. Her presence in my fieldwork made faster for completion.

I find it important to thank all the staffs of Library, Administrative and Laboratory section of Department of Anthropology, University of Calcutta, especially to Kamal da, Sandip da, Prabir babu for extending their help in various ways.

My list of acknowledgements will remain incomplete without mentioning names of my seniors and friends. I am thankful to my senior Bhuban Mohan Das, for his help and suggestions throughout. I would like to extend sincere thanks to Mr. Joydeep Basu for helping me in understanding the statistical methods which played an invaluable role in interpreting the results in my thesis. Mainak’s technical assistance has helped me a lot. The support, encouragement and warmth of my friends Kaushik, Prithwijit, Debasish, Pinaki, Paramita have made my life smooth and fun-filled. I appreciate the way my senior and junior research scholars of Department of Anthropology have helped me during my period of research work.
I take the pleasure to thank one of my closest friends Payel who was there beside me in every critical moments of my life. I am also grateful to my friend Saikat who has inspired me a lot and gave me necessary suggestions. I wish to convey my heartiest gratitude to my brother, Shri Subrata Mukherjee and Bhabi, Smt. Anamika Mukherjee, my uncle, Shri Dilip Chatterjee and aunt, Smt. Mita Chatterjee, who have been an inspiration and have provided unconditional love and care, constant support in everything I choose to do and guidance throughout. I thank them to have believed in my ability and supported me in my study.

Finally, I owe my husband Kaustav for being beside me throughout. His warmth, support and inspiration have not only given me a cheerful work atmosphere but also helped in successful completion of my work.

All my gratitude and heartiest thanks to all of you.

Koel Mukherjee