ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I express my heartfull and sincere gratitude to my ever revered supervisor Prof. G. Ram, Department of Sociology, Assam University, Silchar, without his constant suggestion and guidance the present work would not have been possible. His valuable suggestions helped me to design my synopsis, abstract and finally the manuscript of this thesis. I express my deepest and sincere gratitude to my supervisor.

I am thankful to Prof. B.K. Behera, Head, Department of Sociology, Assam University Silchar, for his kind support and to all the teaching and non-teaching staff of the department, for their co-operation and support extended during the course of the work.

I also express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the respondents from the Silchar town for their co-operation with me during the collection of emperical data. Without their co-operation the data base for the study could not have been built.

I acknowledge the co-operation of the library staff of Assam University, Silchar, and Tezpur University, for giving support during the secondary data collection for the research work.

I would like to thank Prof. Gopalji Mishra, Dean, School of Social Sciences for his kind support.

Special thanks go to Mr. Humayun Bakth, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Assam University, Silchar for all kind of support, valuable advice during the course of my research work in the department.

I also extend my gratitude to Ayesha Afsana for her help during my Ph.D thesis work.

Thanks and gratitude is owned to many individuals for their help in various ways in the completion of this thesis. I would like to thank my parents Ramprasad Sinha and Late Sushama Sinha, sisters - Bhabani, Rani, Bani and Munni and others for their good wishes and full support. I would also like to thank my in-laws Devdas Sinha and Sudevi Sinha who supported me morally to complete my PhD thesis work. It gives me immense pleasure to acknowledge to all those who have been the driving force in completing this PhD thesis work.

I thank two diamonds, my son, Sreejan and the little lovable daughter, Jigeesha, gifts from God, who always missed me during my absence. Last but not the least, I thank my husband Dr.

Subrata Sinha for his tremendous support, care and encouragement throughout my work. I am really grateful to him for taking all the pain during my Ph.D work.

Assam University, Silchar Mrinalini Sinha
20 Jauary 2014