

## Acknowledgement

This thesis would not have been possible without the guidance and the help of several individuals who in one way or another contributed and extended their valuable assistance in the preparation and completion of this study.

I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Sanchari Roy Mukherjee, present Head of the Department of Economics, University of North Bengal. She has been incredibly generous not only with her able guidance and counselling, but also with her faith and confidence in me. She has been a true mentor throughout the entire process of writing the thesis. I am fortunate to have been under her guidance. I am truly indebted to her for her valuable suggestions, constructive criticism and knowledge on the subject.

I express my sincere gratitude to Professor Jeta Sankrityayana for his views on the topic and in-depth knowledge. I would also like to thank Professor Kanak Kanti Bagchi, Professor Anil Bhumali, Smt. Sudakshina Dutta, Dr. Govinda Chowdhury, Sri Tamash Ranjan Majumder, Dr. Kanchan Dutta and Sri. Karan Tamang of Department of Economics, for providing continuous intellectual stimulation at the Department of Economics of North Bengal. There are many more who helped me enormously during my two-year stint at Department of Economics, North Bengal University.

I owe my gratitude to Professor Ajitava Roychaudhuri, Department of Economics, Jadavpur University for his unconditional support in shaping this thesis from start to finish and for the numerous hours he invested in reading its earliest materialisations. His deep insights, enquiries and guidance were invaluable to my learning, both as a researcher and as a person.

I express my gratitude to the administration of St. Joseph's College, especially, our principal Fr. Dr. K.L. George, SJ. for allowing me to avail two-year leave under Faculty Development Programme during Eleventh Five-Year Plan period of University Grants Commission. I am highly indebted to University Grants Commission for allowing me to work as teacher-fellow in the Department of Economics, University of North Bengal and for also supporting me with contingency funds.

I am also greatly indebted to my younger sister Dr. Panchali Sengupta for her thoughtful feedback, statistical support, interesting explorations and encouragement during the preparation of the thesis.

The help rendered by Dr. Dilip Sarkar and Dr. Sawatasiddhya Sarkar also deserves a special mention. I am grateful to my friends Sri Sudeepta Chaudhuri and Sri Arjun Sarathi Das for their continuous support and encouragement. I would like to thank fellow researchers at the Department of Economics for their support and good cheer. I would like to thank Sri Subir Das Mahanata for his computer assistance.

I also gratefully acknowledge the cooperation and help from the officials of University libraries particularly, North Bengal University Library, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Library of Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Government of West Bengal, Kolkata. I am highly indebted to the Documentation Officer of The Centre for Himalayan Studies, Sri Ajay Mishra for providing me huge numbers of research articles pertinent to my research work.

Finally, I owe the greatest debt to my wife Prajna, my parents for their unwavering belief in me and endless patience. Their love and encouragement was in the end what made this thesis possible.



*Anjan Chakrabarti*

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013