

PREFACE

The present dissertation is intended to be my thesis for the degree of Ph.D. in Economics of North Bengal University. The concept of decentralised planning and regional development require rural development to remove growing disparities between the rural and urban economies. To this object, a bulk inflow of electricity to the rural sector may remove inequalities especially in the regions richly endowed with the hydel resources. The present work ventures to add one more modest approach to this broad mass of ideas on agriculture and rural development. What is newer is perhaps its analysis of the power sector in this context, and its use of multivariate analysis in the toolbox of micro-level survey methodology. This may increase the utilitarian content of micro-level surveys.

I acknowledge with whole-hearted and sincere gratitude, the help of my supervisor, Shri Jeta Sankrityayana, Reader in Economics, whose generous and untiring inspiration and guidance have led to these ultimate results. His sincere supervision, which made the hard work easier, and his versatility have endowed me with the zest to find a way through the huge chunks of data according to need. Any kind of formal acknowledgment would be insufficient to repay this debt. I also take the opportunity to express my gratitude to Professor M. Dasgupta who provided me with the project fellowships that supported this study, and valuable encouragement and advice.

Similar acknowledgement goes out to Dr. R.N. Bhattacharya, Prof. F.C. Sarkar, Dr. P. Chakraborty, Dr. H.K. Chakrabarti and Dr. C.K. Mukherjee of the Department of Economics for their ready assistance at the time of every need. I am obliged to Smt. S. Roy Mukherjee for her encouragement and friendly help during the period of this study, and to Smt. S. Datta (Ray), I extend my thankfulness for her assistance.

I should not ignore my obligation to the University and the Department of Economics as a whole. Cooperation and assistance at all levels and facilities extended have contributed to this work in no small measure. So also has been the response from all the agencies and offices and individuals who, with the materials for this research, gave me the benefits of their wisdom and experience.

My reverential acknowledgment with deepest respects and gratitude is to my parents for being ever tolerant and for constant inspiration and encouragement. My respects are due to my parents-in-law for their inspiration and encouragement. Finally, I am deeply grateful to my wife, Chirashree, who has been the main source of inspiration and who has always stood beside me, with cheer and encouragement. Her calm endurance, patient bearing and companionship at all possible times have finally paved the way to the completion of this strenuous task.

I am obliged to Shri Ashim Datta and Shri Monotosh Bose for their friendly help and assistance. I would be at fault if I did not extend my thanks to all my contemporaries, especially to Subrata (De Sarkar) and Atish, who have helped me immensely at the final stage of work. For friendship, for encouragement and above all for moral support my thankfulness goes out to Tapan, Subrata, Subhas, Aniruddha, Ashraf, Michael, Subhasish, Madhu, Debashis, Jayanta, Biswajit and Arghya whose help and assistance was always there whenever needed.

