

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis represents a finale of my field work done in different areas under different villages, and also those frequenting the ICDS centers, under the Matigara Gram Panchayat (26°43'N 88°23'E), Police Station: Matigara, Sub-Division: Siliguri, District: Darjeeling, West Bengal that has taken place over a period of almost four years, starting as a UGC- junior Rajiv Gandhi National Fellow (RGNF) in the Department of Anthropology, University of North Bengal. It is my duty to acknowledge the person who made this research possible.

First of all I would like to acknowledge my supervisor **Professor Jaydip Sen**, Department of Anthropology, University of North Bengal for his untiring, enthusiastic inspirations and constant support to formulate this research work. His valuable suggestions, constructive criticisms and meticulous supervision have given the ultimate shape to the present Ph.D. thesis.

I also like to express my gratitude to **Dr. Pinak Tarafdar, Dr. Samar Kumar Biswas** and faculty members of the Department of Anthropology, University of North Bengal. I am thankful to them for their encouragement, co-operation and valuable suggestion during the work. I am also thankful to the non-teaching staff of the department Sri Narayan Chandra Das and Sujit Kangsha Banik for their kind cooperation.

I am thankful to the library staff of the University of North Bengal, for their valuable support during the research work.

I express my sincere gratitude to all the individuals of the selected Children residing behind the ICDS and those are present in the ICDS center regularly and

their mothers, teacher and staff of ICDS centers, head of the panchayat, for their valuable co-operation and immense patience during the collection of data.

I would like to express sincere thankfulness to many persons who have assisted me during field work. I would particular like to mention Kumari Lily Tuti, Celina Tuti, Nomita Kujur, Kajal Kumari Rauth and Prakash Oraon, Anuj Raj Toppo. I also express my special regards to Dr. Nitish Mandal, Binu Dorjee, Isita Sinha, Sampriti Devnath, all students and those who supported me in any respect during the completion of this Ph.D. thesis.

My greatest personal indebtedness and which I will not forget to mention, is my parents and my sister, my brother, Sister in law, my husband and for their assistance throughout the study and at the time of submission I am pregnant. I am also thankful to them for their understanding, endless patience, encouragement and constant support during the research period.

The financial support extended by the University Grants Commission, Government of India, in the form of Junior and Senior research fellowship [UGC-Ref. NO. F1-17.1/17.1/2012- 13/ RGNF-2012-2013-ST-WES-24896) is also acknowledged.

Finally, I deeply indebted almighty God and my loving parents specially my mummy, papa, sister and my husband for their unfailing love, protection and manifold blessings.

Department of Anthropology

University of North Bengal

Rajammohunpur, Darjeeling

Date: 3/04/2018

(Pushpa Lata Tigga)