ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to place on record my deep sense of indebtedness and gratitude to supervisor Dr. M. Soundarapandian, Professor (on lien), Department of Rural industries and Management, for his guidance, advice, valuable suggestions and his dedication to carry out and complete this work.

I am extremely indebted and extensively grateful to my external member Dr. B. Rajasekaran, Professor and Head, Department of Management Studies, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, for his valuable guidance and excellent suggestions to complete the work.

I express my gratitude to Dr. R. Seerangarajan, Professor and Head, Department of Rural Industries and Management, and the authorities of Gandhigram Rural Institute - Deemed University, Gandhigram for having given me an opportunity to carryout the research work.

I express my sincere thanks to the teachers, Research Scholars and friends in the Department of Rural Industries and Management and other Departments of Gandhigram Rural Institute - Deemed University, Gandhigram, for their help.

Finally, I am thankful to Mrs. M. Sarlin Banu, for the neat typing work.

S. SUDHAKAR