ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The initial inspiration for this study came from my mentor and supervising teacher. Firstly, I had a problem to cope up with conflict resolution ideas emanating from the west. During the course of time, I realised the significance of culture-specific practices in conflict resolution.

This study could not have been completed without the help of so many people, places and institutions. First and foremost I am indebted to Prof. Dr. Moolakkattu Stephen John who gave me food for thought and body in the realisation of this work. The study had to move at snail’s pace for some time due to personal reasons. The constant encouragement of my supervisor helped to complete the study and prepare this manuscript in the serene banyan valley of IIT Madras campus where he was based during the past year. He generously spared his time and sharpened the focus of my study. I am immensely grateful to him.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to all the teaching and non-teaching staff of School of Gandhian Thought and Development Studies for all the support extended to me for the completion of this study at various stages of this work.

This study would not have been possible if it had not been for the generous support and ideas that I received from numerous friends working with various organizations. I owe special thanks for their encouragement, comments and support for this work. Thanks are
due to Shihab and Viswam for assisting me in field work. Many panchayat members found time to discuss with. I am obliged to all of them.

I am thankful to Deepak, Lecturer in Social Work, BCM College, Kottayam who had helped me in verifying the data in SPSS and coming up with the preliminary level statistical analysis of the data.

Somasekharan Pillai, Assistant Professor, University College, Thiruvananthapuram, had been a great help in providing clear directions. He also helped me in the final statistical analysis.

I am thankful to the library staff of MGU main library and department library of School of Gandhian Thought and Development Studies. I am also thankful to libraries of University of Kerala, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, Indian Law Institute, New Delhi, Manipal Centre for Philosophy and Humanities, Manipal, National Law School, Bangaluru, Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangaluru, Indian Institute of Advanced studies, Shimla, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata, Kerala Council for Historical Research, Thiruvananthapuram, Malayala Manorama, Kottayam, Indian Institute of Technology Madras, CapDeck, Thiruvananthapuram and State Central Library, Thiruvananthapuram for providing me with the necessary documents and materials.

I am extremely thankful to the management and principal of St Mary’s HSS, Pattom, Thiruvananthapuram, where I am now working for giving me leave to complete the study. The research study would not have been possible without the support of the school.
I offer a special thanks to my fellow research scholars and dear friends for their constant support for the thesis work and Minitek Computers for the final production of the thesis.

Finally, I acknowledge the love and support of my family especially my mother, wife and two kids and other members for the love, support, kindness and care that they have provided to me.

There are many people who supported me to materialise this study. Keeping all of them in mind, I express my gratitude to all those who supported, guided and inspired me in the completion of the thesis.

Laju P. Thomas