ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I owe indeed everything in this endeavour to my honorific supervisor Dr. A. Sangamithra, Assistant Professor of Economics, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, for her expert guidance, ingenious suggestions, infectious enthusiasm and constructive criticism with meticulous care provided during the whole span of this study. I am indebted to her unrelenting persuasion and goading which kept my academic spirits alive along and enlightened my way of thinking. I would like to express my sincere and deep gratitude for her tireless efforts and encouragement which directed me towards the successful completion of this thesis.

I sincerely thank Dr. B. Muniyandi, Professor and Head of the Department, Dr. V. Anbumani, Professor, Dr. K. Govindarajulu, Professor, Dr. B. Vanitha, Associate Professor, Dr. S. Boopathi, Assistant Professor and Dr. P. Shanmugam, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore for assisting me in many ways during the process of this research.

I owe my wholehearted thanks to Dr. R. Naagarajan, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, P.S.G College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore, for evincing keen interest in my endeavor and constant encouragement at the time of my research. His critical comments enabled me to notice my weakness and make necessary improvements throughout my research work and to do my best in every step.

I am thankful to my well wishers Mr. A. Kanakarajan, Ex-Chairman, Coimbatore Corporation, Coimbatore, Dr. K. Sasikala, Professor and Head, Department of Zoology, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Dr. M. Raju, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Gobi Arts and Science College, Gobi, Dr. A. Duraisamy, Professor, Department of Economics, Madras Christian College, Chennai and Dr. N. Dharmaraj, Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, for their encouraging words during the course of my research.

I express my deepest sense of gratitude to Dr. N. Audinarayana, Professor and Head, Department of Population Studies, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, for his help in the analytical part of my thesis, especially in Econometric model, and also, his assistance proved extremely valuable.

My sincere gratitude goes to Mr. M. Karuna Moorthi, Head of the Department of English (Retd.), Government Arts College, Coimbatore, for his valuable help and suggestions and this thesis would have never taken shape without his help.
I am grateful to **Malcolm Elizabeth Adhiseshiah Trust, Chennai**, for the financial support and opportunity provided to work as a Project Fellow during my research period. I also sincerely thank **The Central Bank of India, Udumalpet Branch**, for providing me indispensable financial support at the time of my research period.

I also wish to place on record my gratitude to **Mr. R. Elango**, Branch Manager, AC Nielsen Company, Coimbatore, for his valuable help in my data collection. I also thank my junior (Brother) **Mr. M. Raja**, Ph.D. Research scholar, Bharathiar University, for his timely help during my research period. I will fail in my duty if I forget my respondents who spared their time to answer the lengthy schedule and furnish information for the study.

I am also grateful to administrative staff members of the Department of Economics and staff members of the library of Bharathiar University. My thanks are also due to Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR), TATA Institute of Social Science and Indian Institute of Population Studies (IIPS) Mumbai, who extended their co-operation to me in using the library and Internet centre.

I am delighted to place on record my thanks to all my friends and my hostel friends for their unselfish help which enabled me to work in a pleasant enthusiastic environment and I extend my sincere thanks to all of them for their co-operation. I do thank, particularly for my inmate **Miss. G. Sangami**, Ph.D. Research scholar, Department of Chemistry for her kind co-operation and gentle psychological push whenever there was a lag. No doubt, such a friendly push kept me going.

Words cannot express my feeling for my family members: my father **Mr. R. Ganapathy Raj**, my mother **Mrs. G. Mahalakshmi**, my brother **Mr. G. Rajendra Kumar** and my nephew **S. Sankar Narayanan** for giving me an opportunity to pursue higher studies and strength, encouragement and patience during my research period.

I express my thanks to **Mr. C. Kamala Kannan and Staff** of the Sree Kumaran Computers for the efficient and neat copies of the manuscript. Finally, it is difficult to name all, but I offer my sincere thanks to all those who have directly and indirectly helped me in completing this research in time.

Above all, I thank **Lord Almighty** who bestowed upon me His unequal blessings that imparted me the capability to complete this thesis in the most successful manner.

*(G.Vanithamani)*