Acknowledgements
Acknowledgements

My heart is filled with profound gratitude while extending my thanks to my supervisor and Guide Dr.V.P.Arunachalam, Professor and Head, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Government College of Technology, Coimbatore. I remember with gratefulness the constant encouragement and care showered on me by the supervisor during the period of this work. His sincere instructions helped me to approach the problem in the right direction and attempt to write acceptable technical reports. I shall cherish my association with him for the care and encouragement I enjoyed.

I am grateful to former Principal and Additional Director of Technical Education Dr.S.Arumugam and the Principal Dr.V.Palanisamy, Government College of Technology, Coimbatore for their encouragement, support and the facilities provided to complete the thesis work.

I like to place on record the encouragement and help of Dr.V.Selladurai, Professor of Mechanical Engineering, Coimbatore Institute of Technology, Coimbatore and Dr.C.Rajendran, Professor, Department of Management sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai.

I furthermore express my sincere thanks to my colleagues in the Department of Mechanical Engineering for their help and cooperation during my work. I sincerely thank the staff of other departments for their help. My thanks are due to all the candidates of my supervisor for their constant encouragement by way of discussions.

I would like to mention the enormous support of my family, in-laws, and specifically my wife Ms.G.Padmavathi and my daughters Selvi.A.Deepthi and Selvi.A.Sruthi for their patience and unstinted co-operation for four years without which this attempt could not have been what it is today.

I express my gratitude to all who have helped in many ways directly or indirectly to complete this work successfully.

K.S.Amirthagadeswaran