ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Introduction is the proper place to begin. But first I bow my head before the Almighty who is always with me. Also I must express my deepest gratitude to people along the way. No words can adequately express the sense of gratitude, still I try to express my heartfelt thanks through words.

I express my deep sense of gratitude to my supervisor and guide, Dr. T. Asokan, Reader, Department of Management Studies, for his expert guidance, constructive criticisms and valuable suggestions. I have received a great deal of support from him in making this study a reality.

I also express my sincere thanks to Dr. P. T. Raveendran, Professor and Head of the Department of Management Studies, Kannur University, Thalassery Campus, Palayad, for providing me the necessary facilities to carry out this work.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. M.J. Mathew, Principal, Miss. Anupama M and Mr. Rejeesh E, Dept. of Computer Science, Mahatma Gandhi College, Iritty for the great deal of help received from them to complete this endeavour. I am also expressing my thanks to all my colleagues in Mahatma Gandhi College, Iritty.

I can never forget the support and encouragement rendered by Dr. Jose K.G, former Head of the Department of Commerce and Management studies, Vimala College, Trichur, through his valuable suggestions in time and the blessings to complete this work.

My thanks are due to the University Grants Commission of India for providing me a research fellowship for three years (2005-2008) to carry out my research under the Faculty Improvement Programme of UGC. I am also thankful to the Principal and Management of Mahatma Gandhi College, Iritty for their permission and support to undertake the work.

I am extremely grateful to the faculty members of the Department of Management Studies, Kannur University, Thalassery Campus, Palayad for their cooperation and support to complete this work. The assistance extended by Mrs. Laila P.I Department of Commerce, Sir Syed College, Taliparamba, Dr. S.M. Abdul Khader, Department of Economics, K.M.M.G.W. College, Kannur, Miss. Raniya Sulthana, BAMS student, Ayurveda College, Parassinikadavu, Mrs. Ninette Rolland, Ph D scholar, Department of English, University Centre, Palayad, Mrs. Hansa N.K, Department of Commerce, Government College, Mananthavady, Mrs. Hemalatha, Department of Commerce, Mattannur College, Prof. A.D. Mustafa (Ex MLA), Mrs. Padma Shenoy and Mrs. Priya Pravin, Bombay is also gratified. Dr. T.P.M. Farced, Faculty Member of the Department of Statistics, Farook College, Mr. K. Jabir, designer, Department of Mass
Communication, University of Calicut is also deserves special thanks for their assistance in the use of statistical tools.

The assistance rendered by the Librarians of various libraries like Kannur University Central Library, University Library of Palayad Centre, Centre for Management (CMD) Library, Centre for Development Studies Library Trivandrum, Kerala University Library, Commerce Department Library of Kerala University, Library of IIM Trivandrum, KSIDC Library, Trivandrum, KINFRA library, Trivandrum, K Bip Library, Trivandrum, ADFIK Library, Trivandrum, Vimala College Library of Trichur, Calicut University Library, CUSAT Library, Small Industries Service Institute (SISI) Library Thrissur, Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) Library Mysore, Library of Barathiayar University, Coimbatore, Bombay University Library, Indian Merchants Chamber Library, Bombay, WTO Cell, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, World Trade Centre, Bombay, Farook College Library, and Library of Mahatma Gandhi College, Iritty should be appreciated.

I am highly indebted to the services rendered by Mr. Rajan, Dinesh Foods, Kannur, Mr. Vivek, Rani Food Products, Vatakara, Mr. M.Khalid, Kilban Foods (India) Pvt.Ltd. Kozhikode, Mr.K.Bean, M/S Saico Spices, Kozhikode, Mr. Venugapal (deceased), BAMS Global Impex, Ernakulam, Mr. Saju Moolan, Moolans International, Ernakulam, Mr. Menon, Devine Foods, Kottayam, Mr. George Isaac, Malabar Food Products, Kottayam, Mr. Hari, Amma Foods, Thiruvananthapuram, Mrs. Jaya, Jaya Foods, Thiruvananthapuram, Mr. Rajagopal, K Bip, Thiruvananthapuram, Mr. Shanavas, Directorate of Industries and Commerce, Thiruvananthapuram, Mr. Narayanankutty, Statistics for Planning, Thiruvananthapuram, Miss. Maya, ADFIK, Thiruvananthapuram, Mr. Bhaskaran, Spices Board, Ernakulam, Mr. Anand, CFTRI, Mysore, and Mr. Unnikrishnan of District Industries Centre, Kannur.

I am heartily thankful to all proprietors of the food processing units in Kannur, Kozhikode, Thrissur, Ernakulam, Kottayam and Thiruvananthapuram districts for their co operation by providing data, information and sharing of ideas with me.

I wish to acknowledge my immeasurable debt to my close relatives and friends for their love and understanding. I also recollect with appreciation my parents Mr.K.P.Ramachandran and Mrs. Sakunthala Ramachandran, aunt Miss.K.P.Leela and brother Mr.Sandeep.R whose joy about my doing research kept me going even when my own enthusiasm faltered. I also wish to thank all those who have been helpful to me in some way or the other to carry out this innovative work successfully.

Above all, once again, I bow my head at the lotus feet of Almighty. Without his grace nothing would have been possible.

Swarupa. R.