ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

No words can adequately express my profound and heartfelt thanks to my supervisors, Dr. N Shanta and Dr. K Pushpangadan. I am greatly indebted to Dr. N Shanta for her inspiring encouragement, concern, patience and help at every stage of my work. The scholarly remarks and suggestions given by her have contributed a lot to make improvements in the work and I am really indebted to her for the patience she showed towards me at the critical stages of the thesis. I express my sincere thanks to Dr. K Pushpangadan for his valuable guidance and support all through this work. I have benefited immensely from numerous discussions with him, which prompted me to think and reflect on my work.

I am indebted to Dr. P Mohanan Pillai for his encouragement and constant support. As a Ph.D co-ordinator he was very much supportive and I express my deep-felt gratitude to him. Thanks are also due to Prof. K Narayanan Nair, Director for his cheerful attitude and support.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Dr. T.M Thomas Issac and Dr. G Omkarnath who were supervisors for my M.Phil Dissertation. I am indebted to them for their valuable suggestions and guidance that enabled me to pursue for the Doctoral Programme.

I am sincerely thankful to Prof. Pulapre Balakrishnan and Dr. R Nagaraj for the discussions on the topic during their occasional visits to the centre.

I thank my teachers at CDS, Dr. G.N Rao, Dr. P.S George, Prof. K.K Subramaniam, Dr. Gopinathan Nair, Dr. E.T Mathew Dr. Chandan Mukherjee, Dr. P.K Michael Tharakan, Dr. K.P Kannan, Dr. P Sivanandan, Dr. John Kurien, Dr. Mridul Eappen, Dr. S. Irudaya Rajan, Dr. M. Navaneetham, Dr. Sunil Mani, Dr. K.J Joseph, Dr. U.S Misra, Dr. Achin Chakraborty, Dr. Indrani Chakraborty, Dr. V. Santhakumar, Dr. P.K Panda, and Dr. Chinnappan Gasper for their constant support during the course of my M.Phil and Ph.D Programmes.

The comments and suggestions of Dr. K N Harilal were quite useful in shaping the ideas of the thesis and I am grateful to him for his constant enquiries about the progress of the thesis. Discussions with Dr. N Vijayamohan Pillai were useful to further understanding of the issues involved in econometric analysis. I thank Dr. M. Kabir for his constant support and encouragement. He was a teacher to rely upon any time. I am indebted to him for all helps he extended to me.

I am grateful to Dr. M. Parameswaran for his help in clearing many econometric doubts and his meticulous reading of the drafts that helped to improve the clarity of presentation. Thanks are also due to Dr. P.L Beena for her comments on my seminar presentations and other discussions. I express my deep-felt gratitude to Dr. Ram Mohan and Dr. Ravi Raman for their useful comments, support and encouragement.

I place on record my sincere thanks to the CDS library and computer staff, especially, Ramakrishnan, Joseph Kurien, Chidambaram, Anil, Mollykutty, Sobha, Ameer, Gopakumar, Anitha, Ancy, Chandrika, Sujana, Muralsidharan, Sreekumari and Radhamony for their immense co-operation and support. I also thank Phil Roy and Githadevi in the academic section for their help and support.
I thank Soman Nair, Registrar and other staff in the CDS administration for their help and assistance that made my stay at the Centre a pleasant experience. Bahadur, Sadasivan and Gopidas deserve special thanks for their kind co-operation with the working of computer centre.

I appreciate the company of my senior friends particularly Antonyto Paul, Murugannan, Anandaraj, Meena, Shaheema, Suresh, Dennis, Sanjith, Vijay Bhasker, Binoy, Saikat Sinha Roy, Hanikurup, Babu P Ramesh, Neetha, Pinakiida, Lekha, Uma, Deepa Sankar, Darley Jose, Deepitha, madhuri, Sethuraman, Aziz, Jojo, Veeraputhran, veeramoni, Prasad, Emmanuel, Sunny, Reddy, Christopher, and Shaji.

My life in the campus owes its richness to the warm friendship, encouragement and support of my friends, Dr. Parameswaran, Hari KS, Nasini Netto, Rajesh P, Venkat Narayana, Venkitesh, Jayasree, Ranjan, Rathikanth, Mohan, Rudra, Subrata, Indu, Lekshmi, Subu, Rajesh Komath, Ashish, Joseph, Aravindan, Syam, Manikandan, Harilal, Varinder and Shyjan. My special thanks to Jayasekhar for his consolation and encouragement during the crucial stages of my work. Thanks are due to Rethnukumar for his jovial company during my stay in CDS.

I enjoyed the jovial friendship of Rajesh Puliyara, Jayachandran, Nimal, Anil, Nixon, Jith, Alex, Suma, Beena, and Jyothi. I owe a lot to all of them not only for the support and encouragement but also for their delightful companionship in the campus. I greatly acknowledge the assistance rendered by Rajesh Puliyara, Jayachandran, Anil, and Pradeep at different stages of the thesis. I deeply indebted to Dinesh Lal for his sleepless nights with me for finalizing the thesis. I acknowledge with great gratitudue the help rendered by Sony Paul during the final days of the work.

I am at a loss for words to express my gratitude to my beloved parents to whom also I dedicate this work. I owe a lot to them for their love, blessings and encouragement, which made me what I am now. I extend the same to my sisters and brother-in-laws. Company with Lekshmy, Gowri and Gayathri gave me respite from the thesis tensions. I express my gratitude to my In-laws also for their encouragement and support.

I owe much to my wife for her patience, support and encouragement that helped me to bring this effort in to fruition.

Above all, I humbly bow before God in grateful acknowledgement, for His blessing and guidance all through my life and this course.

Prabhakaran Nair. V.R