ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My gratitude to all those who helped me extends far beyond this note of acknowledgement.

I ascribe this accomplishment to my supervisor, Dr. K.R. Nayar, whose constant guidance, timely interventions and continuous reassurance helped me to set goals and achieve them.

The other members of the faculty, through their unstinting co-operation, have helped in compiling this thesis.

Ajith Kumar, Development officer, Coir Board Emakulam and P.M.Mathai, Deputy Director, Coir Board Alleppey provided me with available literature and the benefit of their timely assistance.

K. Suresh, Managing director, Kerala State coir cooperation, Madhu Kumar Varma, Deputy Manager, Aspinwall and Company Private Ltd. Mr. Surendran, Secretary, Kerala Coir Mats and Matting co-operative society helped me with the arrangement for conducting this study and granting permission to browse through their official records.

I am grateful to Dr. Thomas Isaae of Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum for rousing my interest in this area of research and for providing me with valuable literature.

The coir workers in Alleppy and Shertallai who took pain to respond to my questions constitute the tangible basis of this work.
My friends Neelu and Sandeepa who extended invaluable assistance in the last phase of my work.

My cousins helped make my task easier and livelier.

My sister, Binu who was a constant source of inspiration and emotional strength throughout the entire effort.

Raja Gopal for his excellent typing within a short time.

My parents whole heartedly stood by me with their constant encouragement.

Vinod whose love and support gave me the final thrust that saw me across the finishing line and without you this thesis would still have remained a dream.

Thank you all.