ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge a sense of deep gratitude to my respected guide Dr. R. Maruthakutti, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Thirunelveli, for his guidance, encouragement and help rendered to me in carrying out this dissertation. I am very much privileged to work under his guidance. His commitment, valuable suggestions and source of inspiration was instrumental in completing this work.

I take this opportunity to express my gratefulness to Dr. N. Kannan, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Thirunelveli, for his fruitful suggestions and valuable comments. I am indebted to Dr. M. Ramakrishnan, Professor and Head, Department of Sociology, Dr. G. Karunanithi, Former Professor, Department of Sociology, Late Dr. (Mrs) S. Muthu Chidambaram, Former Professor, Department of Sociology, Dr. Sam Asir Raj, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Dr. P. Kannappan, Centre for Inclusive and Exclusive Policy, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University for their considerate suggestions and encouragement.

It is a matter of profound honour and privilege for me to receive constant encouragement, inspiration, advice and guidance from Dr. S.V. Udayakumar. Sincere thanks for his constructive suggestions and help in finalizing the sample and data analysis.

I take this opportunity to express my gratefulness to Professor Dr. U.R. Kalliappan, Former Professor, Department of Sociology, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore for his guidance and support in my research work.

I am very much thankful to Professor Clare Wenger, University of Wales, Bangor, UK and Dr. Vanessa Burholt, Swansea University, UK, for their suggestions in selecting this area of research during their visit to India. I extend my sincere thanks to

Dr. S. Irudaya Rajan, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum for his valuable suggestion in selecting this topic.
I wish to extend my gratitude to Mrs. Mariya and Mr. Ugin from Manakudi, Mrs. Mariyam Margeratte from Azhikal, Mrs. Sunitha from Muttom, Mrs. Grace from Kurumpanai, Mrs. Gomathi Mania from Muloorthurai, Mr. Fredi from Alanchi, Mr. Chenthil from Munchirai and Mr. Seejith and Mr. Dinesh from District Collectorate for their kind help and cooperation in identifying the sample of aged persons and providing the details of selected villages.

I extend my thanks to Mr. Pradeep from Mondaicadu who was accompanied me in coastal area during my data collection.

My thanks are also due to all the Librarians and Staff, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum for their excellent help and support during my visit to the library.

My heartfelt thanks to all the respondents who spend me their valuable time and providing data, without cooperation, I would never have been able to present this work.

Above all, I profoundly thank to Almighty God and Nature for their blessings.