ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With great respect, I place on record my deep sense of gratitude and sincere thanks to Dr. C. Sivapragasam, Research Supervisor & Associate Professor, Department of Applied Research, Gandhigram Rural University, in whose guidance the study was conducted. I am obliged to him for his inspiring guidance, kind treatment, timely help and continuous encouragement shown in completing this study and the thesis.

My profound gratitude is due to Prof. G. Arivarignan, Head, Department of Applied Mathematics & Statistics, School of Mathematics, Madurai Kamaraj University for his advices and valuable suggestions as a Doctoral Committee Member, during the course of this study.

I am extremely thankful to Prof. M. A. Sudhir, Head, Department of Applied Research, Gandhigram Rural University for his continuous encouragement and moral support during the course of my study and preparation of the thesis.

I extend my gratitude to Dr. S. Gunasekaran, Associate Professor, Department of Applied Research, Gandhigram Rural University for his valuable suggestions and encouragement to complete this study.

I would like to express my heartfelt and profound thanks for the help and advices rendered especially in regard to policy structures and formulations of this study by Dr. Shrinivas Lokre, Governor’s Nominee on Statutory Development Board, Vidarbha Region, Government of Maharashtra; Former Director, Institute of
Regional Development Planning, Nagpur, Maharashtra; and also Consultant to various World Bank Projects, presently working as Convenor of Research, Consultancy & Corporate Training Cell of ASM’s Institute of International Business and Research, Pimpri, Pune, India.

I acknowledge my deep sense of indebtedness to Prof. David D Hanagal, Department of Statistics & Centre for Advanced Studies, University of Pune, for his advices and valuable suggestions in regard to the statistical analysis and the interpretation of the results obtained during the course of my study.

I extend my profound gratitude for the support rendered by Dr. Saroja Rama Rao, in the capacity of the Director, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Andhra Pradesh, in getting the copies of their publications immediately after my requisition at the Office of the Directorate, Hyderabad; and also to the entire Staff of the Government Library, Andhra Pradesh Secretariat, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad for their generous support by providing various references during my survey of literature.

I am greatfully indebted to my parents and to my wife for their support and encouragement as also to my son Master Thota Sai Karthikeya for his sacrifice and tolerance of my absence for the purpose of my study.

Sincere thanks and gratitude are due to all those who have contributed directly or indirectly to make this study a success.

GANDHIGRAM

THOTA SREE MALLIKHARJUNA RAO