ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis was made possible by an accumulation of personal and professional debts, too numerous to list.

I hereby acknowledge my immeasurable gratitude to the supervisor of my study Dr. T.M. Padmanabhan, Associate Professor of Commerce, S.T. Hindu College, Nagercoil whose discerning eye pervades the whole of this dissertation, for his scholarly guidance that instilled infectious confidence, which invited fresh thinking and above all, for his patent affection towards me.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Dr. P. Geetha, Head, Dept. of Commerce who made my internship as a part time scholar at the Research Centre of the Department truly valuable and useful.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Er. P. Arumugam Pillai, the Secretary, and Dr. A. Meenakshisundararajan, Principal, S.T. Hindu College, my present employers – who always encourage me and evince sustained interest in my academic attainments.

I owe a special debt to all those 500 respondents, who cheerfully bore with me in responding to my tedious questions. The answer they gave, the comments they made, and the suggestions
they offered, provided useful insights into the subject matter of the study; the edifice stand in my name, but the bricks are theirs; I thank each and every one of them whole heartedly.

I extend my sincere and heartfelt thanks to the higher officials and staff members of the Department of Economics and Statistics, Office of the Additional Director of Livestock and Kanyakumari District Milk Producers Cooperative Societies for their generous cooperation in providing all the required data.

I express my sincere thanks to the Librarians of S.T. Hindu College, Nagercoil, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram and Hindecon Research Centre, for providing the valuable study materials pertinent to this study.

I thank Dr. C. Ramachanran, Head, Department of Economics and all the faculty members of the Department of Commerce and Economics for their support to carry out my work.

My special thanks to my grandfather Dr. D. Velappan, Rtd. Principal, S.T. Hindu College, Nagercoil for his valuable advice, encouragement and affection towards me.

I wish to place on record my sincere thanks to Dr. Murugan, Principal, Thiruvalluvar College, Bapanasam, and Dr. C.A. Sham
**Shankar**, Assistant Professor, Post Graduate and Research Centre, Department of Economics, S.T. Hindu College, Nagercoil who is always a source of inspiration to me.

I thank **Prof. R. Hariharan**, Director and all my colleagues in self supporting courses for their support and encouragement.

May I devote this opportunity to thank my father **Thiru. A. Mathusoothanaperumal Pillai**, my mother **M. Shenbagavalli**, my brothers **M. Rajesh** and **M. Natesh**, my better half **T. Veeralakshmi** and my sons **A.V. Suthan** and **A.V. Arun** who kept me going.

I also wish to thank my uncle **Dr. N. Neelakandan**, Associate Professor of Physics, my cousins **Prof. U. Easwara Pillai**, Assistant Professor of Social Work, **Prof. N. Kannan**, Assistant Professor of Social Work and **Dr. K.U. Madhu**, Assistant Professor of Physics, for their support and encouragement.

I shall be failing in my duly if I do not express my sincere gratitude to God, the Almighty who helped me a lot in the completion of this task by showing his Mercy and Grace.