Acknowledgement

“All men by nature desire to know” · · · Aristotle

Little did I realise a few years ago, when stepped into this course of work and that it would grow and develop into a completion of this manner. It has demanded more discipline than I was capable of, but the rewards and experiences left me enriched. The preparation of this thesis is a memorable event in my life and I cherish this work for the learning it gave to me. I do acknowledge that no research work ever grows full-bloom from the researcher alone. The work and the writing came from me, but I had many others along my way with hands stretched out in compassion, giving me advice, guidance, and endless support, without which I could not have completed this study. I am glad to express my sincerest thanks and appreciation to all those who helped me in realising this dream.

In the maze of approaches, concepts, and theories, I would have been a lost soul, if not for the continuous and consistent guidance of my supervising guide Dr. Tharsis Joseph, formerly Reader and Head of the Research and Postgraduate Department of Commerce, St. Thomas College, Palai, and presently the Principal of Deva Matha College, Kuravilangad. His profound knowledge and varied perspectives, the innumerable sessions of patient hearing and advice, I am forever indebted to him. I hope the fruition of this study would be the best guru dakshina I can offer him. He is a teacher who is a down to earth realist, who had been a pillar of support throughout my study. His encouragement and motivation had been the proverbial elixir of life when many a time I was running out of fuel and slowing in the race. Dr. Tharsis Joseph, beloved teacher since my graduation studies, had a unique method of motivating people and whose satire sarcasm kept me thinking and working. I consider it fortune that I had the opportunity to learn the lessons of research under Dr. Tharsis Joseph, and no words are sound enough and no letters are bold enough to express my deep sense of gratitude to my supervising guide.
In the course of this study, I have drawn intensively ideas and opinions from the discussions made with many academicians and industrialists. One name I must make a special mention. I have greatly benefited from my discussions with Dr. Gabriel Simon Thattil, Reader in the Department of Commerce, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram. I remember with gratitude for the encouragement and sincere help rendered by him.

I owe a great deal to Prof. Thomas Abraham, Manager of Bishop Abraham Memorial College, who has always extended an unstinted and whole hearted affection and support to me. I remember with gratitude the inspiration showered upon me by Dr. Varghese Mathew, Principal of Bishop Abraham Memorial College, Thuruthicad. My love and affection to late Rev. Dr. T.C. George, the founder Manager of Bishop Abraham Memorial College, Smt. Achamma George, former Manager, and Dr. M.N. George, former Principal of the College are countless, for their patronage extended to me and permitting me to pursue academic research.

In completing this project, I have had the blessings and prayers, goodwill and co-operation of members of different Faculties of Bishop Abraham Memorial College, Thuruthicad. Major John Mathews, Head of the Postgraduate Department of Commerce; Dr. P.K. Mathew, former Head of the Department; and my colleagues in the Department, deserve a special mention being there for me.

To the Staff of Office and Library of Bishop Abraham Memorial College, for the good turns they have done for me, I thank them.

I remember with gratitude the blessings and motivation extended to me by the St. Thomas College family, Palai. The Department of Commerce, St. Thomas College, Palai has witnessed my transition from a B.Com. student to being a Lecturer and also as a Research Scholar, a status that finally given me a chance to express my gratitude to my beloved teachers. I would like to pen a word of gratitude to Rev. Dr. Mathew Maleparampil, and Rev. Dr. Mathew John Kokkat; the former principals of the college. I will always nurse in mind the encouragement and support extended to me in various ways by Dr. K.K. Jose, Reader in Statistics and Principal of St. Thomas College, Palai, who is also the professor and research guide of my wife. A word of special mention to Dr. Thomas, V.P., Shri. Kuriachan George, and Dr. Tomy Jose C., my fellow researchers at the Research Centre of Commerce, St. Thomas College, Palai.
A special word of appreciation and love to the Office Staff of St. Thomas College, Palai. Their promptness, support, and love have been gratifying. They have helped me glide through the official hassles without much ado.

I would like to express my deep sense of gratitude to the Librarians of St. Thomas College, Palai; Bishop Abraham Memorial College, Thuruthicad; Cochin University of Science and Technology, Cochin; Kerala University, Thiruvananthapuram; Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam; Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram; The Rubber Board, Kottayam; Centre for Management Development, Thiruvananthapuram; State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram; School of Management Studies, University of Cochin; Department of Commerce, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram; Institute of Management in Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram; Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore; and The Indian Council of Social Sciences Research, New Delhi.

I do acknowledge my special indebtedness to the Management, Office Staff, and other employees of the 28 industrial establishments spreading across the length and breadth of Kerala, for their kind permission and whole hearted co-operation in gathering necessary primary information for the successful accomplishment of the study.

I express my deep debt of gratitude to Dr. Jeevanand E.S., Reader in the Department of Statistics, Union Christian College, Aluva, for his sincere endeavour in processing the primary data and shaping the statistical analysis contained in the thesis. The services extended by Dr. C. Chandralekha is also sincerely acknowledged in this context.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the University Grants Commission, New Delhi for selecting me as a teacher fellow under its Faculty Improvement Programme for teachers in colleges and universities.

I think it is the right time and fine chance to reaffirm my sincere gratitude and affection to all my teachers without whose noble teaching and innocent prayers, I would never have been reached this pedestal in life. I remember them all, right from Rev. Sr. Beromia who ignited the spark of knowledge in my mind during my first standard. Esteemed teachers of St. Paul's LPS, Vakakkad, St. Vincent EMHS, Palai, St. Paul's HS, Valiyakumaramangalam, St. George's College, Aruvithura, St. Thomas College, Palai and University College of Teacher Education, Kudamaloor, all are in my mind for instilling me a sense of responsibility and illumined the light of knowledge in me.
For my parents, this was their dream. I am indebted to them for teaching me all the lessons in life to become this able, and in particular, that lesson that I shall never cease to be a learner. My parents Shri. Jose and Smt. Leelamma, and sister Smt. Deepa have been selfless in giving me the best of everything and I express my deep gratitude for their love and support. I do thank my parent-in-laws Shri. Tomy and Smt. Aleyamma and other members of our family for their abundant blessings and prayers.

It is with deep sense of love and strong feelings of gratitude that I recall the encouragement and endurance so overwhelmingly expressed by my beloved wife Smt. Lishamol Tomy. She has gone through every trough and crest of my study and this work is as much her as it is mine. To her, my love and my return from this journey.

I am thankful to the staff of Smarttek Computers, Athirampuzha for the elegant layout and design and undertaking the printing work of the thesis.

There are so many others whom I may have inadvertently left out and I sincerely thank all of them for their help and prayers. Thanks for being with me.

Above all, with all my heart and soul, I thank the Almighty God for guiding me through all the difficult paths and taking care of me during this time and always. His rod and his staff have always led and protected me; I bow my head and bend my knees before Thee.

Deepu Jose Sebastian