ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

During the course of this research work, I received a lot of encouragement, support, advice, suggestions, assistance, and good wishes from many sources. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to each one of them.

First and foremost, I express my deepest sense of gratitude to God Almighty, the source of all wisdom and power, for His providential care and mercy towards me in leading, guiding, and protecting me throughout this work.

I am deeply indebted to my guide and supervisor, Rev Fr Dr T M George, School of Gandhian Thought and Development Studies (Former Principal, Nirmala College, Moovattupuzha), for his timely help, valuable guidance, prayers and support, without which I would not have been able to finish this work.

I am also grateful to Dr M Maharajan, Professor and Director, School of Gandhian Thought and Development Studies, Dr Mahajan P Mani and Dr M P Mathai (both former Directors, SGTDS), for their wholehearted support, guidance, and encouragement and for providing library and computer lab facilities for my work, especially during the Faculty Improvement Programme period. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the members of the faculty of SGTDS, especially Prof Dr S John, Prof A K Joseph, Prof Dr Nirmala Devi, and all the office staff for their constant support and encouragement.

May I express my deep sense of gratitude to Rev Sr Annet Chalangady, Manager, Bishop Kurialacherry College for Women, Amalagiri, Kottayam, Rev Sr Rosamma V P, Principal, and Rev Sr Lisamma Jose, Vice Principal, for their prayers, encouragement, and support.

I am thankful to the University Grants Commission, Dr K Sreerenganadhan, Former Director of College Development Council, M G University, Kottayam, the Government of Kerala, the Management of B K College, Amalagiri, Dr
Tessy Kurian, Reader and HOD, Economics, B K College, Amalagiri, and Prof. Varghese Eapen, C M S College, Kottayam, for the sanctioning of the teacher fellowship and granting me deputaion for completing this work.

My sincere thanks goes to Dr Jacob John, Project Director, Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi for providing library facilities for collecting secondary materials.

May I also extend my gratitude to Mr T K Jose, IAS, Former Executive Director, Kudumbasree Mission, Rev Fr Dr Gregory Onamkulam, Former Director, Changanassery Social Service Society, Mr T C Varghese, Director, World Vision of India, Alappuzha, Smt Leena Abraham, Programme Coordinator, World Visison of India, Changanacherry and Mr Saji Plamparambil, Animator, World Vision of India, Pathanamthitta for their timely help in collecting reports of their various activities, collecting indepth information regarding their women empowerment programmes and performance, and their wholehearted support for primary survey.

I am also thankful to Dr Mridual Eapen, Member, Planning Board, Kerala State (Former Professor CDS, Thiruvananthapuram) Dr Jacob John Kattakkayam, Director, Academic Staff College, University of Kerala, Dr B Alvin Prakash, Head of the Department of Economics, Kariavattom, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, Dr M Saralamma, Department of Economics, Kariavattom, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, and Dr Mathew Kurian, Visiting Professor, School of International Relations and Politics, M G University, Kottayam, for their encouragement, support, valuable comments, and suggestions for finalizing this study.

May I fondly remember the late Rev Sr Mary Xavier (First Principal, B K College and former HOD Economics) and the late Rev Sr Aleyamma T Palathara (Former HOD History).

I also express my gratitude to Rev Sr Kuttyamma Mathew, Vicar General, SABS, Aliwa (Former HOD, Economics, B K College), Rev Sr Annakkutty Philip, Rev Sr Mary Joseph, Rev Sr Rose Kanacherry, (Former Principals, B
K College), Rev Sr Thresiamma N M, Principal, Nirmala Bhavan, Thiruvananthapuram (Former HOD, Political Science, B K College), Smt Annamma P C (Former HOD History) and Dr Vijayalakshmi C, Visiting Professor, Department of History, Assumption College, Changanassery (former HOD History, B K College) for their constant encouragement, love, and prayers.

I am also indebted to all my colleagues in the Department of Economics, Mrs Lysamma Emmanuel, Mrs Merly Zachariah, Mrs Rosamma Joseph, Mrs Philominamma Jacob, Dr Leena Mathew, Ms Manju Joseph, and all other present and former teaching and non teaching colleagues and friends of B K College, Amalagiri, for their encouragment, prayers, and support, especially during the FIP period.

I would also like to thank the various animators of CHASS, World Vision of India, officers of the Area Development Society and Community Development Society of Kudumbasree Mission, for their help in interviewing the beneficiaries, attending their weekly and monthly meetings, and for providing resource materials.

I am thankful to Mr Rajesh for his assistance in the primary survey. My thanks goes to Mr Binoy John and Mrs Najma Binoy John of Norma Institute of Social Research and to Mr M C Jose, Selection Grade Lecturer, Department of Statistics, S B College, Changanassery, for their timely help and painful efforts in analysing the data.

I take this opportunity to thank the librarians of Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, School of Gandhian Thought and Development Studies, Kottayam, Bishop Kurialacherry College for Women, Amalagiri, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, Indian Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi, Centre for Development Studies Thiruvananthapuram, and Kerala University Centre, Kariavattom, for their timely service and co-operation.
I also express my gratitude to Rev Fr Tom Kunnumpuram, Director, St Mary Academy for Resource Training, Changanassery (Former Principal, S B College, Changanassery), Mr Mathew Thomas, Coordinator, SMART, Changanassery (Former Senior Manager, Canara Bank, Changanassery), Dr Ruble Raj, Selection Grade Lecturer, Department of English, S B College, Changanassery, and Dr Cyriac Joseph, Department of Economics, K E College, Mannanam, for their support, encouragement, and prayers throughout my work.

My special thanks goes to Mr Jomy Thomas, my brother-in-law (Senior Correspondent, Malayala Manorama, New Delhi), for his timely help and advice.

I pay my sincere thanks to Mr Sugunan, Lars Computer Centre, Athirampuzha, for setting, printing, and binding the thesis.

Above all, I am indebted to my beloved mother, Mrs Thankamma George, brother, Dr Biju George, in-laws, Mr Thomas J Ampattu and Mrs Mariamma Thomas, my sons, Arun George and Amal George, all my relatives, and well wishers for their prayers, constant encouragement, and support. My husband Mr George Thomas, Selection Grade Lecturer, Department of English, S B College, Changanassery, deserves special thanks, which I cannot express in my words, for his encouragement, whole hearted support, and editing the entire thesis.

Beena George