ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am extremely indebted to The Almighty God for making this report fruitful. Further, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my research guide Prof. Dr. K. X. Joseph, Head of the department of Commerce, S.H. College, Thevara, for his patience, motivation, enthusiasm, and immense knowledge and the continuous support extended to my research. His guidance and constant encouragement motivated and inspired me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis.

I owe a deep depth of gratitude to Dr. Johnson X Palackappillil, Principal, Sacred Heart College, Thevara and Fr. A.J. Saviance CMI, Former Principal for their valuable advice and motivation given to me for the completion of the study. I remember with heartfelt affection, the valuable encouragement and support given by the Faculty members of the Commerce department.

I am greatly indebted to Smt. Sheela Thomas IAS (Chairman, The Rubber Board), Sri. Sajan Peter IAS (Former Chairman), Sri. V.J. Kurian IAS (Former Chairman) for their valuable support and co-operation. I remember Late Edison Fernz (Dy. Rubber Production Commissioner of Rubber Board, Kottayam) for his inspiration and support given to me.

I would like to express my gratitude to Ramesh B. Nair (Dy. Director, Statistics and Planning Department), Smt. P.V. Claramma (Development Officer) and members of the staff. My special thanks to Director and members of Rubber Research Institute of India, Sri. S. Mohankumar (Marketing Officer) and the members of the department of Export Promotion Council, Sri. M. N. Omanakumar (Deputy Director) and the members of the Licensing and Excise Duty Department, the Deputy Director and members of the Publicity and Public Relations Divison.

I am indebted to Sri. K.G. Vijayakumar (Managing Director), Sri. M.K. Ravi (General Manager) and the members of the staff of Kavanar Latex Ltd. Kottayam for
their kind co-operation during the collection of data and inspiring suggestions for this study. My heart-felt gratitude to the officers and other staff of different rubber products exporting firms, various dealers of rubber products, officials of RPSs, the rubber cultivators who were approached during data collection etc.

I express my gratitude to the Librarians and library staff of Sacred Heart College, Thevara, The Rubber Research Institute of India, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam and Cochin University of Science and Technology for their co-operation.

I am thankful to Dr. Joy Jacob, Statistics Department, St.Thomas College, Pala who supported me with SPSS work. My sincere thanks to Mrs. Benedicta Antony for her help in data entry and language correction.

I remember the pain taken and care extended by my Parents and In-laws, my husband Mr. Robin Mathew, my daughter Liz, my family members (Emi Mathews, Mabel Joy, Dr. Antony G, Anju E, Mrs.Serin Miranda, Jomi Sebastian) and all my relatives and friends who supported throughout the study. I am grateful to all my well wishers who directly or indirectly contributed to making this effort fruitful.

TIA MATHEWS