ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank the Management and Principal, Erode Sengunthar Engineering College, Erode for their continuous support and encouragement and for providing the facilities required to complete this work.

This work would not have been possible without the help and support from my supervisor Prof. S. Selvan. I would like to thank him for his guidance, patience, ideas, encouragement, stimulating discussions, and everything I have learned from him. He is a living lesson in efficient time management.

I am grateful to the members of my doctoral committee Prof. S.Arumugam and Prof. N. Sivanandhan for their help and constructive criticism.

I am grateful to the anonymous referees who did the task of reviewing our journal and conference papers, and providing valuable suggestions, comments and criticism in improving the quality of the work.

I am pleased to thank my colleagues for their cooperation in sharing my academic load during this work.

I do not find right words to express my thankfulness to my family members, for their love, prayers and backing.

V. VENKATA CHALAM