ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author expresses her deepest gratitude and sincere thanks to Dr. S. Kandasamy, Dean Anna University Tiruchirapalli, Ariyalur campus, Ariyalur for his valuable guidance, suggestions, constant support and encouragement throughout the period of this research work.

The author wishes to record her heartfelt thanks to the Doctoral Committee members Dr. G. M. Samuel Knight Director CPDE and Professor of Civil Engineering, Structural Engineering Division, College of Engineering Guindy, Chennai and Dr. S. Seetharaman former Deputy Director SERC and Professor of Civil Engineering, Sathyabama University Chennai for their expert comments and suggestions during Doctoral Committee meetings.

The author thanks Prof. S. R. Damodarasamy, Principal and Dr. P. Perumal Head of Department of Civil Engineering, Government College of Engineering Salem for permitting her to use the Laboratory facilities. The author also thanks Dr. S. Sukumar Assistant Professor in Civil Engineering for his valuable suggestions.

The author thanks all the teaching, non-teaching, post-graduate students of Department of Civil Engineering for their help. The author is extremely thankful for the encouragement and co-operation of her family members without which this work would not have been possible.

R. PADMAPRIYA