ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people, especially my Supervisor, faculty members, family members, friends and officials have helped me in completing this Ph.D. Thesis. I am greatly indebted to each and every one of them for their sincere help, advice and constant encouragement, without which the work never would have been completed. I wish to extent my humble and honest gratitude to each of them.

First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude and thanks to my supervisor Prof. Aslam Mahmood for his able guidance, advice, criticism and cooperation even in his busy schedule. I am deeply indebted to my supervisor.

Prof. Vemuri and Prof. Kulkarni of the centre helped me with critical suggestions at various stages of the study. I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to each of them. I convey my thanks to the Library officials of JNU, CSRD Documentation centre, NIHFW, Population Foundation of India, Institute of Economic Growth, Ratan Tata Library, NCAER, National Medical Library, V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, Kerala University, Department of Demography and CDS Library.

Sincere thanks are due to the unknown respondents in Kollam districts, who patiently answered to my queries, and spent their valuable time and resources with me during the fieldwork. My thanks also go to CSRD Computer Centre technical experts, especially Varghese and Binod for their assistance.

I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to my friends Francis, Dr. Jayachandran, Dr. Dilip, Michael, Joshy, Dr. Sanil, Kunju & Kidilam Biju, Anoop, Nikhil, Joseph, Anil, Pradeep, Manu and many well wishers for their valuable assistance at various stages of my work.

Finally, I wish to extend my deep gratitude and love to my achan, amma, aniyan, chechi, chettan and muttassi for their constant love, support, well wish and faith in me, without which this work never have been possible.

V. PRAKASH NARAYANAN