It gives me immense pleasure and happiness to express my deepest sense of gratitude to my research advisor Dr.R.NARAYANASAMY, Assistant Professor, Department of Production Engineering, National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli, for his able guidance, encouragement, support, motivation and inspiration throughout the course of my research work.

I express my sincere thanks to Dr.A.NOORUL HAQ, Assistant Professor, Department of Production Engineering, National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli for his support and encouragement extended during my research work.

I am indebted and thankful to Dr.K.S.PANDEY, Professor and Head, Department of Metallurgical Engineering, National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli for his valuable suggestions and motivation to complete the research work.

I solicit my heartiest thankfulness to Dr.SHA!NUGAN, Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli for sparing his precious time and extending his help in completing this research work.
I express my sincere thanks to Dr. ELWIN CHANDRA MONIE, the Principal, Thanthai Periyar Government Institute of Technology, Vellore and Prof. G. VEDAGIRI, Professor (i/c), Department of Mechanical Engineering, T.P.G.I.T., Vellore for their encouragement and motivation.

I also would like to express my thanks to Mr. SRIDHAR, Mr. RAMESH, Mr. JOHN, Mr. ROSHAN BABU and others who extended full and whole hearted support and co-operation in preparing test samples and also for the assistance in conducting the experiments.

My earnest thanks to Mr. O. S. M. SIRAJUDEEN, Mr. K. KUMARASAMY, Mr. C. RAJASEKARAN, Mr. M. RAMAKRISHNAN, Mr. K. GANESH BABU, Mr. SAKTHI RAMKUMAR, Mr. SIVAPERUMAL and all others for helping me in preparing the thesis.

With the blessings of my mother Late JANABA M. HAWWA BEEVI, I would wish to appreciate and thank my father HAJI K. ABDUL RAHIM, my wife JANABA M. MALIK JAAN BEEVI, my son S. MOHAMMED ABDUL MAJEETH and my daughter S. KADHIRUNNIISA for their patience, sacrifice and co-operation they have extended towards me for the successful completion of this research work.

I thank one and all who have directly or indirectly contribute for the successful completion of this research work.

A. SYED ABU THAHEER