ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I submit my heartfelt thanks to the feet of the Almighty for his blessings showered upon me to complete this work successfully.

I am extremely grateful to my research supervisors Dr. A. Kumerasan, Head, ICAR Centre, Sri Parasakthi College for Women, Courtallam, and Dr. R. Palaniappan, Reader and Head, PG Department of Microbiology, Sri Paramakalyani College, Alwarkurichi for their able, sustain and inspiring guidance relating to my research work. Their valuable and prompt suggestions, skill and efficicencies, no doubt enabled me to complete my work in time.

I express my thanks to my co-guide Dr. G. S. Vijayalakshmi, Reader, Sri Paramakalyani Centre for Environmental Sciences, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Alwarkurichi. ... I also express my heartful thanks to Dr. N. Sukumaran, Professor and Dean, Sri Paramakalyani Centre for Environmental Sciences, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Alwarkurichi, who was kind enough for accommodating me as a research scholar in the institute. I record my thanks to Dr. M. Arunachalam, Reader, Dr. A. G. Murugesan and Dr. A. Manimekalai, Lecturers, Sri Paramakalyani Centre for Environmental Sciences, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Alwarkurichi.

It is my duty to acknowledge my deep gratitude to Prof. S. A. Shanmugam, Department of Fish Processing Technology, Fisheries College and Research Institute, Tuticorin for his immense and timely help at various levels in completing my thesis. My thanks are also due to the following dignitaries of the same institute, for providing me with necessary information and data sought and extending their valuable suggestions Dr. G. Indira Jasmine, Dr. V. Ramadas, Dr. Santhanam and Dr. Jeyashakila Faculty members and Mrs. R. Ezhil Rani, Librarian.
I am thankful to Prof. K. Ramkumar, Professor of Statistics, Fisheries College and Research Institute, Tuticorin, for his able guidance in deciding the statistical tools used in my research work.

I express my sincere gratitude to Mr. R. Gowrisankar, Senior Lecturer, PG Department of Microbiology, Dr. V. Perumal and Dr. A. J. A. Ranjit Singh, Reader and Head, Department of Biology, Sri Paramakalyani College, Alwarkurichi and Dr. R. Kasthuri Bai, Professor of Microbiology, School of Energy, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, for their timely help.

My thanks are due to Dr. M. Peter Marian, Professor and Head, Institute of Coastal Area Studies, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Scott Christian College Campus, Nagercoil, for his generous help and valuable suggestions.

I express my sincere gratitude to Mrs. S. Jalaja, Principal and Secretary, Mrs. K. Angammal, Head, Department of Botany, Dr. M. Selvi and Dr. R. Neeraja, Lecturers, Sri Parasakthi College, Courtallam for the kind interest they took in my research work.

My sincere thanks are due to Dr. C. Rajeswari, Reader, Department of English, Sri Parasakthi College, Courtallam, for helping me in the language aspect of the work.

I thank my cousin brother Mr. R. Vishnu Prakash, Software Engineer, Sathyam Computers, Bangalore, for collecting the required information through Internet.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not thank Mr. S. Rajkumar Thomas, T. Dhasarathan, A. Anita, A. Muthukumaran, S. Chandrasekaran, H. Zahir and K. Maridas, Research scholars, Mrs. Pitchammal and M. Navaneedhan, Lab. Assistants, Sri Paramakalyani Centre for Environmental Sciences, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Alwarkurichi for their kind help. I also express my sincere thanks to Mr. S. Petchiappan and Mrs. C. Meena Lab. Assistants and staff of ICAR Centre, Sri Parasakthi College, Courtallam.
I thank the Director, Southern Regional Office, U.G.C. Hyderabad for selecting and providing FIP facility and financial assistance for the successful completion of my research work.

I thank my family members for their understanding, moral support and co-operation through out the course of my research work.

Finally, I extend my deep gratitude to Mr. R. Vijayakamatchi, SaRa Offset, Tenkasi for having typed out this report without delay. I must make a special thanks to Mr. CT. Kannan, ABHI DTP, Tirunelveli Junction for the neat printing and binding work of my thesis.

V. INDIRA