ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis would not have gained the present status without the invaluable inspiration and timely guidance received from my teacher and guide Dr. C. Jayasri, Reader, Department of Mathematics. Words are few to express the deep sense of gratitude I feel towards my research supervisor, for giving hands to me to enter the world of academic research.

I owe a deep sense of gratitude to Dr. K. S. S. Nambooripad, former Head of the Department of Mathematics, University of Kerala., Dr. A. R. Rajan, Head, Department of Mathematics, University of Kerala., Dr. M. I. Jinnah, Professor Department of Mathematics, University of Kerala., Dr. V. Nandamohan, Professor and Head, Department of Futures Studies for their academic motivations.

I articulate my sincere thanks to the Director, and Staff of Ramanuja Institute of Mathematics, University of Madras, Chepauk, Chennai., Director, and Staff of Institute of Mathematical Science, Taramoni, Chennai., Librarian, Central Library, IIT Madras., Director, IISC., Bangalore and Librarian, V.S.S.C., Thiruvananthapuram for co-operation and help rendered to carry out the study.

My sincere thanks to all the faculty members and other research scholars, Office Staff and Librarian of Department of Mathematics, University of Kerala for their kind help and co-operation. My genuine thanks to all well wishers for their encouraging support through out the period of research work.

My colleagues and the Director, Institute of Distance Education, University of Kerala were extremely co-operative with me and I extend my sincere thanks to all of them.

Above all, with almost reverence and gratitude I submit myself and my work before the ‘Almighty God’ who made me enable every challenge into success till this day of seeing my thesis in print.

07-10-2004

K.S. ZEENATH