ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my deep sense of gratitude to Professor J.J. Shah, FNA, Head, Department of Biosciences, Sardar Patel University, Vallabhb Vidyanagar for his encouragement, inspiring guidance, cradling of independence of thoughts and constructive criticisms, which are mainly instrumental for the successful completion of this investigation.

I thank Messrs A.R. Badarinarayan, K.T. Shamaiah Gowda, R.S. Aswathanarayana, K.G. Subramanya, M.V. Ramaswamy, H.V. Dattatreya Shastry, M.C. Maheswarappa, S.N. Thirthappa, K.N. Nagabhushana Shetty, Pukraj, S.R. Ramaiah Shetty, P.N. Shankaranarayan, H.S. Narayana Bhat and S.N. Shankaramurthy, the authorities of D.V.S. Management, Shimoga, Karnataka State for their constant encouragement during this endeavour, giving prime importance to the cause of education and having accorded the academic leave to carry out this work.

The award of teacher fellowship by the University Grants Commission, New Delhi is gratefully acknowledged.

I am indebted to Professor M.V. Parthasarathy,
Division of Biological sciences, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, who inculcated interest in me to carry out the trend analysis presented in this thesis.

The countless critical discussions and everwilling help of Dr. V. Raghavendra, Department of Mathematics, have been solely resonsible for the construction of the mathematical model, a part of this investigation. I offer my bountyful thanks to him.

The constant interaction and counsel of Professor S.M. Shah, Dr. D.N. Shah, Department of Statistics and Mr. H.F. Patel, Department of Agro-economics, Vallabh Vidyanagar at every steps of statistical analysis are sincerely acknowledged.

I heartily thank Dr. R.K. Jain, Messrs D.S. Kulkarni, S.G. Desai, P.C. Patel and Mrs. Smitha Shah and Mrs. Sudevi Patel from Department of Computer Science for their everwilling help and unfailing enthusiasm.


This endeavour could not have been successful, but for the constant encouragement and whole hearted Co-operation of my collegues, Dr. M.N.B. Nair, G.M. Nair,

I extend my thanks to Dr. G.L. Shah, Reader in Botany, Dr. S.S. Yadav, Messrs. T. Soman, V. Badarinath, and Sr. Lillyamma Mathew, the authorities of Botanical Survey of India, Shillong, Botanical Garden, Darjeeling, for their help in taxonomic identifications; and Drs. T.C. Patel, J.D. Patel, and I. L. Kothari for their timely help and suggestions.

My thanks also due to the authorities of Sardar Patel University, the teaching and non-teaching staff of Department of Biosciences and all my friends for their help.

The artistic help from Mr. Navin Patel is sincerely acknowledged.

Meticulous typing work of Mr. Rashesh K. Parikh and Mr. Usman H. Vohra is commendable.

I pay my affectionate tributes to the members of my family who have endured my longstanding silence, for their understanding and hearty encouragement during the course of this investigation.

R. R. CHAVAN