ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is a matter of pleasure and great privilege to acknowledge my profound gratitude to all those who helped me in this endeavour.

I owe a sense of unbound indebtedness to my supervisor, Dr. (Mrs) Tehal Kohli, Reader, Department of Education, Panjab University, Chandigarh, for her ungrudging, incisive and extremely illuminating guidance at all stages of this study. Her painstaking efforts and precious advice have immensely contributed in improving the quality of thesis. The inexhaustive degree of patience and forbearance shown by her makes me feel moved. I wish my words could express my true feelings for her.

My special thanks to Dr. Gandotra, Jammu Medical College and the social workers of various rural areas of Jammu District who have helped me in collecting data from various villages, parents' of subjects who have provided information about their wards, and the individuals who acted as subjects of the present study.

I wish to express my gratitude to Kamayani School for the Mentally Handicapped, Shivajinagar, Pune and its branch at Chinchwad, Pune, for allowing me to collect data and providing all assistance.

I owe a unique debt to Mrs Indumati Rao, Director Seva-In-Action, Bangalore, who has been a source of great inspiration, and permitted me to collect data and be part of the self-help group. My thanks to all the staff of Seva-In-Action who helped me ungrudgingly and gave me their valuable time in visits to rural areas.
I acknowledge my thanks to Mr Ramanathan for painstakingly typing and for the computer work. My special thanks to my parents and Shri SC Dey for all the help and assistance.

Last, but not the least, I am deeply indebted to my dearest husband, who has been a source of constant inspiration and encouragement to me. I might not have been able to present this piece of research, but for his co-operation and benign assistance.

I express my gratitude and am deeply indebted for the guidance and help made available to me by the above and many more who have directly and indirectly helped me in the successful completion of this thesis.

Murthy Bharathi
MURTHY BHARATHI