ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to God for the blessings, courage and strength in completing this work.

I wish to express my deep gratitude and sincere thanks to my research supervisor Dr. Vighnesh N Bhat, Professor, Dept. of Post Graduate Studies in Sociology, Kuvempu University, Jnana Sahyadri, for his academic stimulus, meaningful guidance and invaluable suggestions and all the help in carrying out this study, but for whom this work would not have taken the present shape.

I am indebted and obliged to Dr. Surinder Singh Jodhka, who, in fact, suggested this topic of research and with whom I started this work initially in Hyderabad Central University, Hyderabad.

I am thankful to University Grants Commission and Hyderabad Central University for funding me for one year of Junior Research Fellowship.

The Diploma programme on Data Analysis in Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai helped me considerably in understanding a few statistical packages which are used in analysing the present work.

I am highly grateful to my teachers Dr. H M Panchaksharaiah, Dr. A. Ramagowda, Shri Chandrashekar, and my friend Dr. Anjanappa in the Department of Sociology, Kuvempu University for their motivation and periodic academic advice which greatly helped me in completing this work.

I am deeply indebted to my senior colleagues in the Department of Sociology, Bangalore University, Bangalore, Dr. G Sivaramakrishnan, Dr. K G Uma, Dr. R Venkatasubbiah, Dr. Y Narayan Chetty, Dr. B Chikkamalurappa, Dr. C Somasekhar, Dr. Samatha B Deshmante and also to Dr. N Jayaram, at present in TISS, Mumbai, for their continuous support and encouragement.
I would like to thank Dr. Sumitra Bhat for the affection and for treating me as a family member and to Vasudha and Vaishali for being jovial.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to my adored parents for their blessings and enthusiastic support. I am also indebted to other members of my family for helping me tirelessly and patiently in all sense in completing this work.

I acknowledge with warm affection for the continuous support, co-operation and inspiration received from my beloved wife Sujatha while carrying out this work.

My special thanks to Mr. Ravi M Tirupur and Miss Deepti S for editing the first two drafts of the thesis and for providing valuable suggestions. I am also thankful to my friend Dr. E Chandrashekar for his support. My respondents from Shimoga deserve my deep sense of gratitude and acknowledgement.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who have helped me directly or indirectly in completing this work.

[Signature]

Date: 30/1/04

C.R.Rajesh