ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost let me express my profound gratitude to Dr. K. Sham Bhat, Professor and Head, Department of Economics, Pondicherry University for his sagacious guidance, pungent criticism and probity in approach. His presumptuousness facilitated me to opt for the present area of research and also to complete the thesis in the stipulated time.

I am indebted to my revered teacher Prof. P. P. Pillai, formerly Head, Department of Economics, Dr. John Mathai Centre, University of Calicut, for being a constant source of inspiration which helped me to land in Pondicherry University.

Inspite of his official preoccupation, I got invaluable statistical assistance from Dr. S. Amanulla, Reader, School of Management, Pondicherry University. I am deeply obliged to him for his expertise, humility and commitment towards the subject.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the faculty members of the Department of Economics, Pondicherry University for their timely assistance and encouragement throughout my stay at the University.

My sincere thanks are due to the Principal of Government M.G.M.P.G. College, Itarsi, Madhya Pradesh, Head of the Department of Economics Prof. P. K. Mishra and all the Colleagues who smoothly facilitated my sojourn in Pondicherry.

It is my duty to convey my gratefulness to the Ministry of Higher Education, Government of Madhya Pradesh for sanctioning study leave and extending all official assistance for the completion of the thesis.
As a matter of fact, no word can convey my heartfelt gratitude to my mother, my wife Nimya and my daughter Vismaya for their affection and perseverance showered on me inspite of several odds.

The family members of Prof. K. Sham Bhat owe much respect for their forbearance during my visit to his house.

My heartfelt thanks are due to Mr. J. Manoj, Senior Assistant, Establishment, Pondicherry University, Mr. P.R. Madhusoodan and Mr. K. Durairaj, Ph.D. Scholars of Department of Economics, Pondicherry University for their timely assistance.

Special thanks are to Mr. Vinod Krishna, Assistant Professor of Zoology and Mr. K.L. Chourey, office staff, both of Government M.G.M.P.G. College, Itarsi, who pleasantly sorted out all the administrative technicalities during my study period.

I will be failing in my duty if I am not acknowledging the hostel inmates of Pondicherry University, who have nurtured a family atmosphere and extended all sorts of help.

It is a matter of pleasure to express my deep sense of gratitude to the Librarian and assistants of Pondicherry University Library, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore, Directorate of Arecanut and Spices Development, Calicut, Indian Institute of Spices Research, Calicut, Spices Board, Kochi, Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, Kochi and India Pepper and Spice Trade Association, Kochi for the library assistance offered to me.

Mr. D. Venkata Ramana Moorthy, Office Manager, Department of Economics, Pondicherry University has extended all assistance without any hesitation throughout my stay. Let me acknowledge sincere thanks to him.
The painstaking task of reading the manuscript was undertaken by Dr. P. Bhaskaran Nair, Reader, Academic Staff College, Pondicherry University. Let me convey my gratefulness to him for hearing me in the midst of his busy schedule.

Last but not the least, my sincere thanks are to Mr. R. Saravanan, New Link Computers, Opposite to Pondicherry University-II Gate, for his dexterity and promptness in executing all the computer work.

M.V. Kanakaraaj