ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Throughout the period of Research, and the preparation of this thesis, until the time of its printing, all the works have been eminently supervised, checked and corrected by my Supervisor Dr. C.A. Antony and I am thankful to him.

I had the benefit of discussing some of the basic issues of this study with the following persons who were sources of intellectual inspiration throughout my study.

(1) Dr. K.C. Sankaranarayanan, Former Head of the Dept. of Applied Economics, Cochin University of Science and Technology, [CUSAT] Cochin.

(2) Dr. M. Kunhaman, Reader, Dept of Economics, Kerala University, Thiruvananthapuram.

(3) Dr. S. Jayaraman, Dept of Statistics, KFRI, Peechi, Thrissur.

(4) Dr. Rajan Varughese and Dr. Raju K. John, Union Christian College, Alwaye.

(5) Dr. M.K. Sukumaran Nair, Dept of Applied Economics, CUSAT.

(6) Dr. S. Sankar and Dr. P.K. Muraleedharan, Kerala Forest Research Institute, Peechi, Thrissur.

The following institutions had kindly permitted me to use the facilities at their libraries and I sincerely acknowledge the assistance rendered by the Librarians of all these libraries.

(1) Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram.

(2) State Planing Board, Pattom, Thiruvananthapuram.

(3) Directorate of Scheduled Tribes Development, Vikas Bhavan, Thiruvananthapuram.

(4) Kerala Institute for Research, Training and Development Studies of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (KIRTADS), Kozhikode.
I am greatly obliged to the Mahatma Gandhi University for granting me the University Research Fellowship for three years for completing this programme.

I acknowledge the Union Christian College community, particularly the faculty members of Departments of Economics and English and the members of the Non Teaching staff of the College, who helped me in different ways towards the completion of this Research Project.

I am thankful to Sri. N.F. Jose who has executed the word processing and printing of this thesis.

Love and caring inspiration of my parents and my only sister Shybi, kept me motivated, and I believe that the Divine Invisible Hand guided me throughout.

August 14, 2000

P.M. REJIMON