ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

From the depth of my heart I express my deep sincere gratitude to the Almighty for his blessings he has bestowed upon me to do this work.

I am indebted to my guide and supervisor **Dr. Jesurathnam Devarapalli, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Pondicherry University**, who is instrumental in shaping and planning of this thesis. I am grateful for his kind consideration, timely help and scholarly suggestions throughout the course. He refined the thoughts and ideas and put his valuable suggestions to bring this dissertation to its desired form. I thank him deeply for the help and guidance, which I received from him at every stage of my work.

I am sincerely grateful to **Prof. K. Srinivas, Doctoral Committee Member, Department of Philosophy, Pondicherry University** for his constant encouragement and valuable suggestions.

I express my deep gratitude to **Prof. A. Chellaperumal, Doctoral Committee Member and Professor, Department of Anthropology, Pondicherry University**, for his constant encouragement, help and valuable constructive comments.

I am sincerely thankful to **Prof. T. Subrahmaniam Naidu, Head, Department of Anthropology Pondicherry University** for his valuable suggestions.

I take this opportunity to convey my heartiest thanks to **Dr. Sarah Strauss**, visiting professor, (Professor, Dept. of Anthropology, Wyoming University, Laramie, WY) for her valuable suggestions.

I am also remembering with gratitude the encouragement given by the faculty, Department of Anthropology **Dr. Valerie Dhkar, Dr. Ajeet Jaiswal and Dr. Rajesh G Kundargi**.

It’s my fortune to gratefully acknowledge the support of all my colleagues Arun Kumar A S, Bhagath Singh A, Kalidas, Kshama, Mangam Visvam Rao, Mehala S.A, Nisar, Poomagal, Sriram, Samakya, and Valarmathi for their company and support during the preparation of this thesis.

My Special thanks to Reddy Sekhara, Krishna, Arithra Samajdar and all PG students who co-operated with me to shape up this project successfully.
I would also like to extend huge, warm thanks to my friends and well-wishers in and out of the Department. I am indebted to my roommates, hostel inmates, friends and kith and kin for their love and affection, which inspired me to do my work effectively.

I express my sincere thanks to Pondicherry University Central Library; Kannur University Central Library, Kannur; Kannur University Centre Library, Thalassery; French Institute library, Puducherry; Calicut university library, Kozhikode. KIFRI Malappuram, KIRTARDS library Kozhikode and Dravidian university library, Kuppam, which provided enough resources and material for my research work.

I express my thanks to our department office staff and Office Assistants for their cooperation.

I am also thankful to all Cholanaikkan, Aranadan and Malapanikkkar members, Forest Officers, ITDP officers, Tribal Extension Officers, Promoters, Grama Panchayath officials, Officials of Keystone Foundation in Nilambur, GCC officials, and VSS officials in Nilambur North and south divisions and ex-officials of these departments of my study area for their co-operation and help during my field work.

I am specially indebted to my Juniors Syamjith, Siraj, Shimjith and their family members who shared their residence with me during the period of fieldwork and extended brotherly love towards me.

My special thanks to Sreekumar, Unni, Bindhu, Balan, Narayanan, Babu, Manoj, Anoop, Safeela, Sreedevi and Sunita for their kind help and support in the field during the period of data collection.

I render my sincere thanks to UGC and Pondicherry University administration for awarding me fellowship that enabled me to do this work.

Last but not least my regards to my parents and brother Sreejith V P, for their great source of inspiration, co-operation, encouragement and moral support to me in completing this dissertation work.

SREEJISHA V P