ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author makes grateful acknowledgement of her indebtedness to Prof. R. Rajalakshmi for guidance in the conduct and presentation of these investigations and to Prof. C.V. Ramakrishnan for his encouragement. The author also wishes to express her sincere thanks to the members of this department for their kind co-operation.

The investigations reported in this thesis were supported by the University Grants Commission under their Special Assistance Programme.