

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost the investigator places her heartfelt salutations and gratitude to the most merciful, the most compassionate **Lord Jesus Christ**, for His abundant blessings and grace alone this endeavor has been possible.

The investigator places her reverential gratitude to **Dr. T. S. Avinashilingam, Founder, First Chancellor and The Doyen of Nutrition, Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas, M.A., M.Sc., Ph.D., (Ohio State), D.Sc. (Madras), Former Chancellor**, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore for providing the most congenial atmosphere in the most revered Institute for the conduct of the study.

The investigator expresses her heartfelt gratitude to **PadmaShri. Dr.P.R.Krishnakumar, Chancellor**, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore, for providing all the facilities to carry out the research successfully.

The investigator places her respectful gratitude to **Dr. T. S. K. Meenakshisundaram, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.**, the then Chancellor, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore, for giving her the opportunity for the conduct of this research work.

The investigator expresses her deep sense of gratitude to **Dr. (Mrs). Premavathy Vijayan, M.Sc., M.Ed., Dip.Spl. Edn., M.Phil., Ph.D., Vice Chancellor**, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore for providing all the infrastructural facilities and extraordinary support in conducting the research work.

The investigator expresses her profound thanks to **Smt. Shailaja Teacher, Honorable Health Minister Kerala State**, for her encouragement and timely help to carry out the study.

The investigator records her profound and deepest thanks to **Dr. (Mrs.) S. Kowsalya, M.Sc., M.Phil., Ph.D. Registrar**, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore, for extending all the possible help towards the completion of the study.

The investigator gratefully acknowledges the valuable suggestions and constant encouragement of **Dr. (Mrs.) N. Vasugi Raja M.Sc., M.Phil., Ph.D. (Madras), Dean, School of Home Science and Professor of the Department of Textile Science** for her enlightening inspiration and support rendered at each and every step of the study.

The investigator takes pride of her association with her guide, **Dr. A. Thirumani Devi, M.Sc., M.Phil., Ph.D., Professor and Head, Department of Food Science and Nutrition, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore,** whose distinguished helping nature, strong support, guidance, motivation, valuable advice and patience has brought out this research to a success. The investigator is ever indebted to her for taking the time and effort and constructive criticisms provided for this research.

The investigator expresses her sincere thanks to **Faculty members** of the Department of Food Science and Nutrition for their constant support and encouraging words at all times of the research work.

The investigator is extremely thankful to **Kerala State Tribal Welfare Department** for their timely help and concerns. The investigator expresses her heartfelt gratitude to **Kannur and Wayanad District Tribal welfare Officers, staff members and Tribal Promoters** for their immense help at various levels for getting the required permissions in time to carry out the research without any hurdles.

The investigator expresses her earnest thanks to **all the selected tribal girls and their parents** for their immense enthusiasm and involvement during the course of the research work. Special thanks are due to **all the tribal participants** of the study for giving their consent and willingly rendering their co-operation without whom the study would not have been happened.

The researcher is deeply indebted to her **Congregation (Sisters of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament) and all Superiors** for their support and prayers in bearing all the odds during the course of the research work. Their constant and steady support has formed the strong foundation for the accomplishment of this research work.

Last but not the least, the investigator is deeply indebted and expresses her gratitude to her **Dear Father, Mother, Brother and other Family Members** for their constant encouragement, love and affection and who has also been the part of my journey in difficult times throughout the completion of the study.