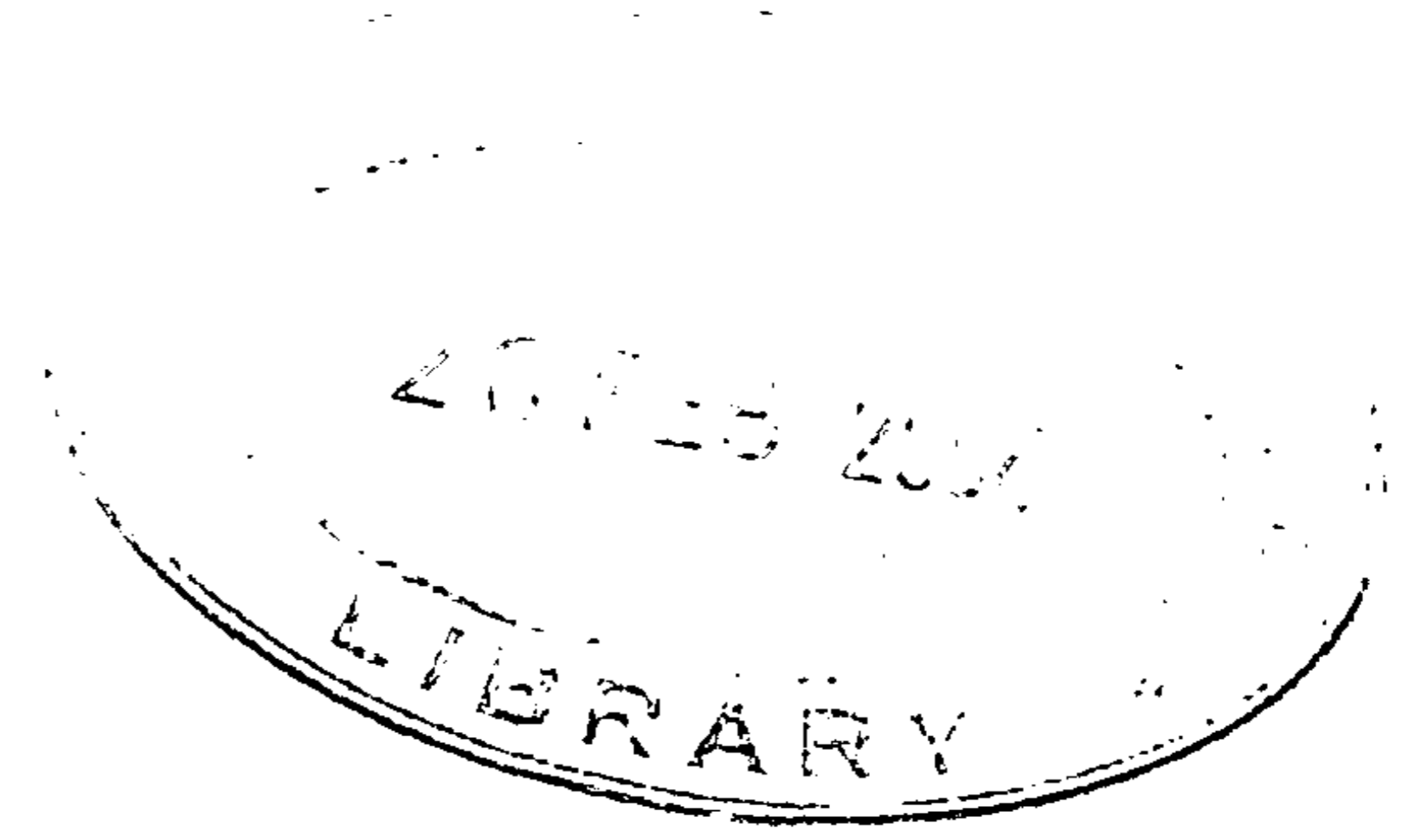


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ABSTRACT

A Cross sectional survey was carried out in the Medical Officer of Health area Udunuwara to determine the knowledge and practices on contraception among married female school teachers and to identify sources from which current users obtain family planning services with reasons for doing so. The data were collected using a pretested self administered structured questionnaire. A multistage stratified sampling method was used and the sample was selected on probability proportionately to different grades of schools and ethnic differences. Only the data collected on pre menopausal women were analysed. Data of Tamil respondents were not interpreted, as the number was very low.

Contraceptive Prevalence Rate was only 52% among teachers, which was lower than the national prevalence and non-user rate was high among the teachers above 45 years of age. Of the current users 41.4% practice natural and traditional methods of contraception while 58.6% use modern methods. Contraceptive prevalence rate among the Muslim teachers was higher (61.4%) while prevalence among Sinhalese teachers was only 49.7%. Sinhalese teachers recorded a significantly higher knowledge on modern permanent methods than Muslim teachers did. Either the subjects they teach or the academic qualifications they possess did not show any significant association with knowledge. The teachers' knowledge on natural and traditional methods was better than the knowledge they had on both modern temporary and modern permanent methods. Ever users' knowledge was significantly higher than that of the non-users. Although it appears that the teachers who had been exposed to training on family planing and reproductive health have a better knowledge, it was not statistically significant. A majority of teachers in the sample who used contraceptive methods, practised modern temporary methods. Forty three percent of the current acceptors obtained their services from non governmental sources, while 40% did not use services from either governmental or non governmental sources. The presence of a medical officer in the clinic, conducting clinics on week day afternoons and reducing overcrowding were important factors to increase the credibility of the government family planing services among the school teachers.