

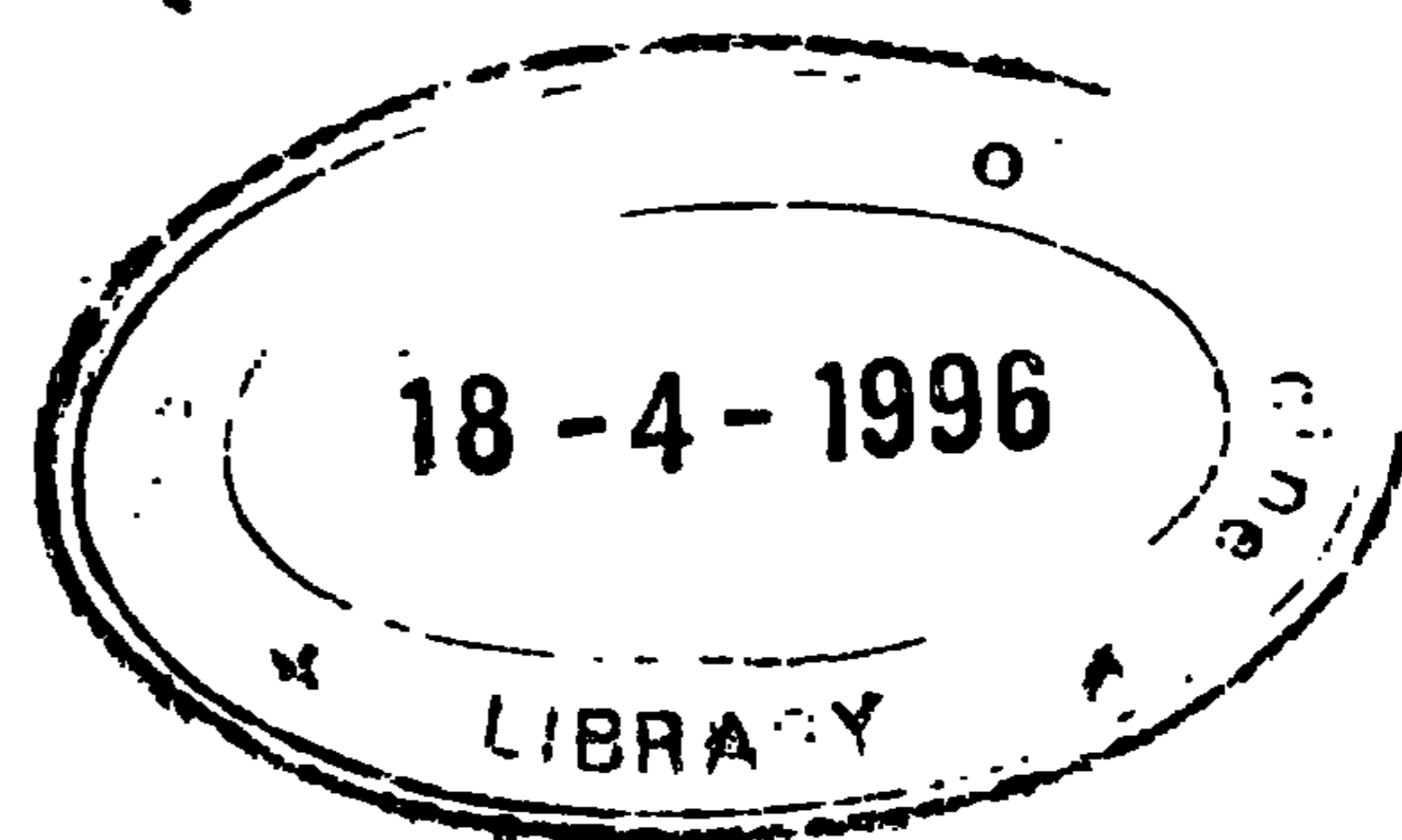
SUMMARY

Malaria is one of the most important tropical diseases in the World today. Pregnant mother is considered to be more susceptible to malaria, due to many physiological changes that take place during pregnancy. Low Birth Weight of the newborn is strongly suspected, as one of the complications due to malaria infection during pregnancy.

Main objective of this study was, to observe the association between the incidence ^{of} low birth weight and the malaria infection in the pregnant mother, and to determine the influence of some socio-economic and demographic factors, on the occurrence of malaria in pregnancy. This study was carried out in the health area of Hingurakgoda, in the North Central Province.

Hundred mothers who were exposed to malaria during the course of pregnancy and a group of hundred mothers, who were not exposed to malaria during the course of pregnancy were studied comparatively. The required information were collected retrospectively.

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Incidence of low birth weight and prematurity, in the newborn, was found to be significantly higher in mothers who were exposed to malaria than in mothers who were unexposed.

Behavioral factors such as, frequent ante natal visits and use of personal protection measures, found to have protective effect on the incidence malaria in pregnancy.

Low educational level, low income and occupation of agricultural nature, were also associated with the occurrence of malaria in the pregnant mother. Primipara mothers ^{were} found to have higher risk of contracting malaria due to *P.falciparum*, compared to multipara mothers.

Study results suggest that, mothers exposed to malaria during pregnancy have a higher risk of delivering babies with low birth weight. However, the effect of some confounding factors such as educational level of the parents and the income of the family, should have to be considered in interpreting these results.