

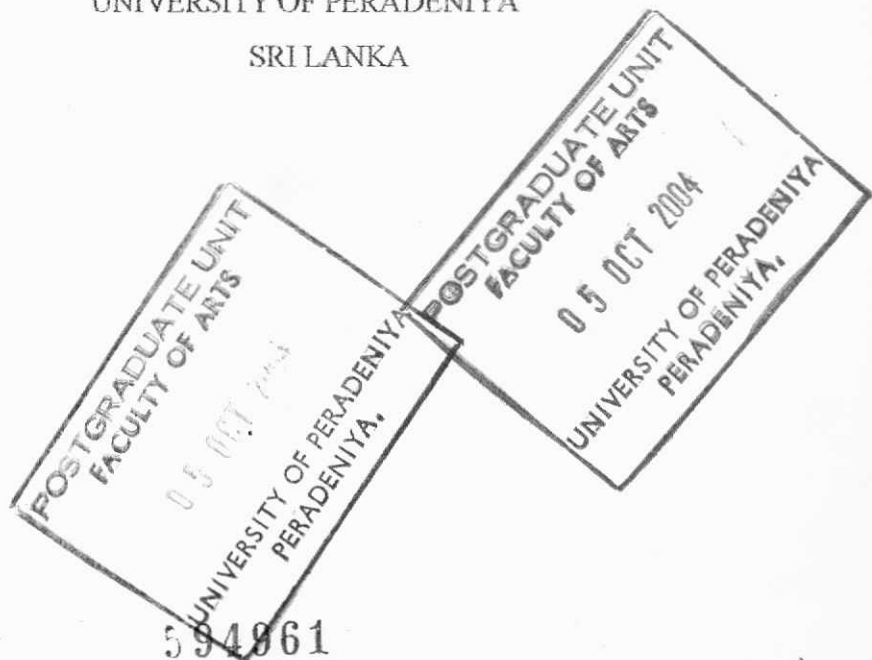
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Factors Affecting Recurrence of Malaria in Sri Lanka with Special Reference to Mahaweli Settlements

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to examine the socio economic, cultural and behavioral factors influencing malaria recurrence, transmission and control of malaria in two settlements namely, System C and System H area of the Mahaweli Development project in Sri Lanka. The study based on the household survey which covered 654 households from selected six villages in both Systems.

The method of conducting a household survey has made it possible for the author to analyse the contextual conditions and the incidence more closely and with greater precision, because information on many malarial patients who seek treatment from non-governmental health institutions do not get recorded in national data registries and therefore the statistics they provide are deficient. The shortage of trained microscopists in rural areas and lack of field assistants too have affected the proper and accurate recording of cases and therefore malaria situation in the country is underestimated.

For the investigation of the whole spectrum of socioeconomic, cultural and behavioural factors related with malaria and disease ecology the 'KABP' survey method was adopted. The 'case-control' method in "computer software package in **Epidemiology**" (**Epi version 6**) was used to analyse the empirical data presented herein. Analysis of the study identified many patterns of malaria incidence associated with the socio economic and behavioural factors of the people relating to recurrence of malaria in the area. These patterns fall into three categories already identified as environmental factors, vulnerability factors, and intervention factors respectively. Vulnerability factors such as poverty, education workplace, behaviour, clothing, and lifestyle etc. effectively

contribute to the recurrence of malaria. Poverty found to be a key influencing factor. Location and condition of the houses are also quite significance factors of which determined the degree of malaria and extent of malaria incidence.

The study emphasizes the point that Malaria control should be considered as a way to enhancing the quality of life and human development and also as a means of increasing productivity together with the reduction of recurrent expenditure. Therefore it is essential that a holistic approach be adopted to control malaria in the Mahaweli settlement areas by integrating multiple aspects related to development in an effective manner. This study further illustrates that there is a greater potential in preventive 'age-old' remedies available in the country as a way to effectively combat the malaria menace and the spread of malaria. This is a '**retrospective approach study**' conducted to identify the malaria situation in a government sponsored land settlement schemes in a less developed part of the country, inaugurated some decades back. Therefore this study can help one to understand the root causes and consequences of malaria disease still existing in these settlements in the Dry Zone of the country. The experience of this study can help to formulate policies to control malaria in malaria prone areas and also will guide the policy makers with regard to appropriate meaning in future resettlement programmes.