

LEADERSHIP SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF FARMER  
REPRESENTATIVES ON GAL OYA IRRIGATION  
SETTLEMENT SCHEMES

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The findings on this study is based on the research that was conducted in Gal Oya Left Bank (GOLB) in 1986, soon after the completion of the Gal Oya Water Management Project (1980-1985).

The study focussed its attention on the impact of formal and informal training given to Farmer Representatives (FRs) in developing their leadership skills. The important research questions that were posed are as follows:

What were the contributions of both formal and informal methods of training for the development of effective leadership in the GOLB?

- (a) What formal methods of training, e.g. field training, have contributed to development of an effective leadership?
- (b) What informal methods of training, e.g. group meetings, have contributed to evolve an effective leadership?

The entire methodology of this study was based on two hypothesis derived from the defined goals.

- (1) : The effective leadership of FRs of the GOLB varies with the type of training.
- (2) : The effective leadership of FRs of the GOLB varies not alone with the type of training but also in relation to the background of the FRs.

Farmers felt that they could solve the following problems, using the knowledge and skills gained through training programmes.

1. Multi-cropping water requirements
2. Inadequacy of technical knowledge of some farmers
3. Damage to structures and bounds
4. Staggered cultivation
5. Wastage of water at head-end

The new practices introduced through farmer trainings related to farming and irrigation water management were frequent as well as readily adopted. The study found two reasons for this;

- (a) Non-cohesive traits of farmers, because kinship ties and neighbourhood were not binding.
- (b) The ideas and messages conveyed to farmers and FRs through trainings were readily accepted as they were associated with the existing value system.