

FARMER PRODUCER ORGANISATIONS – AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIO PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF TELANGANA STATE

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ABSTRACT

Beyond the farm gate, FPOs contribute by guaranteeing that consumers receive high-quality products, assisting with social welfare programs, fostering entrepreneurship, and advancing environmental sustainability. The ex-post facto research design was used to carry out this study. The data was collected from the Board of Directors of Telangana state's FPOs that were sponsored by NABARD. From both women's and mixed FPOs, the samples were selected by random sampling technique; that is, 60 women's BoDs from women's FPOs and 60 men's BoDs from mixed FPOs. Thus, making a total of 180-respondent. The results showed that among men BoDs in mixed FPOs, majority of the respondents belonged to high level of participation in FPO activities, leadership qualities, decision making ability, and risk bearing ability. Whereas, Women BoDs in mixed and women led FPOs belonged to medium level of participation group, leadership qualities, decision making ability, risk bearing ability. The overall data also showed that, majority of the respondents from three categories (men and women in mixed FPO and women in women FPO) had medium level of economic motivation. From the results, it was also found that men BoDs attended more trainings than women BoDs. Majority of the respondents belonged to medium level to low level of self-reliance.

Keywords : farmer producer organisation, board of directors, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

INTRODUCTION

A Farmer Producer Organisation is a hybrid between cooperative societies and private limited companies. A producer organization is an association, a society, a cooperative, a union, a federation, or even a firm that has been established to promote the interests of farmers (Sharma, 2023)

FPOs play a role beyond the farm gate by ensuring the delivery of quality produce to consumers, supporting social welfare initiatives, encouraging entrepreneurship, and promoting environmental sustainability (Dechamma *et al.* 2022). As per the study conducted by Ajim Premji University, the age of FPO varies from 1 to 18 years with 45 per cent of the FPOs between 2 and 4 years old, 30 per cent of FPOs aged between 4 and 8 years. Only 4 per cent of the FPOs (710) are older than 8. The median number of shareholders ranges from 10 in Haryana, Odisha, and Rajasthan. Above 400 in Karnataka, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. Forty-seven per cent of the FPOs are categorized as small-sized with less than 100 farmer members, 28 per cent considered to be large

with more than 500 members.

The establishment and promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) in India are facilitated by several nodal agencies, commonly referred to as promoting organizations, which provide financial and institutional support. Among them the foremost promoters are the Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC) under the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

A Producer Organization can carry out the following essential activities like sourcing of inputs, providing market information, spreading technology and innovations, assisting with financing for inputs, aggregating and storing produce, conducting primary processing such as drying, cleaning, and grading, building brands, packaging, labelling, and ensuring standardization, implementing quality control and export, marketing to institutional clients and engaging in commodity exchange. (Padaliya *et al.* 2022)

As per 2025 data, 375 FPOs have been formed under NABARD's direction, with around 1.59 lakh farmer

members. Of these, 11 are women-oriented FPOs, with a total of 3,393 women members (Shiva Jyothi *et al.*, 2025). Under legal guidelines, a producer company must have at least five and no more than fifteen Directors. These Directors, along with the general manager and FPO personnel, are responsible for planning, executing, and monitoring the organization's activities. The companies act does not specify qualifications for directors. Instead, each producer company has the authority to set eligibility criteria for its directors in its Articles of Association (AoA). However, according to the Act, Only individuals can be directors, Institutions or legal entities cannot serve as directors; instead, they may appoint individuals to take their place and director's term should last at least one year but can be extended to a maximum of five years, as specified in the company's AoA.

These Directors, along with the general manager and FPO personnel, are responsible for planning, executing, and monitoring the organization's activities. With this wide range of duties, efficient resource mobilization and FPO guidance toward sustainability and profitability depend heavily on strong and involved leadership.

However, a review of current literature highlights a significant research gap—there are no dedicated studies that systematically assess the socio psychological characteristics of BoDs in FPO

OBJECTIVE

To study the socio-psychological characteristics of Borad of Directors of Telangana state.

METHODOLOGY

The research design used to carry out the investigation was ex-post facto. For the study, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) promoted women-led FPOs and mixed FPOs in Telangana were selected. Out of 277 NABARD active FPOs, 44 best working mixed FPOs were selected and out of 11 women led NABARD FPOs, 6 best working FPOs were selected for the study. In mixed FPOs, 60 male and 60 female boards of directors were chosen by random sampling technique, constituting total of 120 boards of directors; in women's FPOs, 10 female boards of directors (BoDs) were chosen from the chosen FPOs, making a total of 60 women BoDs. Thus, a total of 180 respondents were selected for the study. The data was collected by well-structured and pre tested

interview schedule.

Statistical tools used for the study were :

(1) Correlation

Correlation was used to find out the extent of the relationship between the scores of independent variables, each of profile variables and the scores of dependent variables i.e., role performance

r = coefficient of correlation between x and y

Σx = sum of independent variable x

Σy = sum of dependent variable y

Σx^2 = sum of squares of x variable

Σy^2 = sum of squares of y variable

n = size of the sample.

The computed r values were then compared with the tabulated values at 1 and 5 percent levels of significance.

(2) Henry Garrett's ranking technique

$$\text{Percent position} = \frac{100 (R_{ij} - 0.5)}{N_j}$$

Where,

R_{ij} = Rank given for the i th variable by j th respondents

N_j = Number of variable ranked by j th respondents

With the help of Garrett's table, the percent position estimated was converted into scores. Then for each factor, the scores of each individual were added and then total value of scores and mean values of score were calculated. The factors having highest mean value were considered to be the most important factor under the study. The mean scores for all the factors were arranged in the order of their ranks and inferences were drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participation in FPO activities

It referred to the frequency of participation of respondents in FPO activities. The respondent's participation was classified into three categories, low (8-19), medium (20-30) and high (30-40).

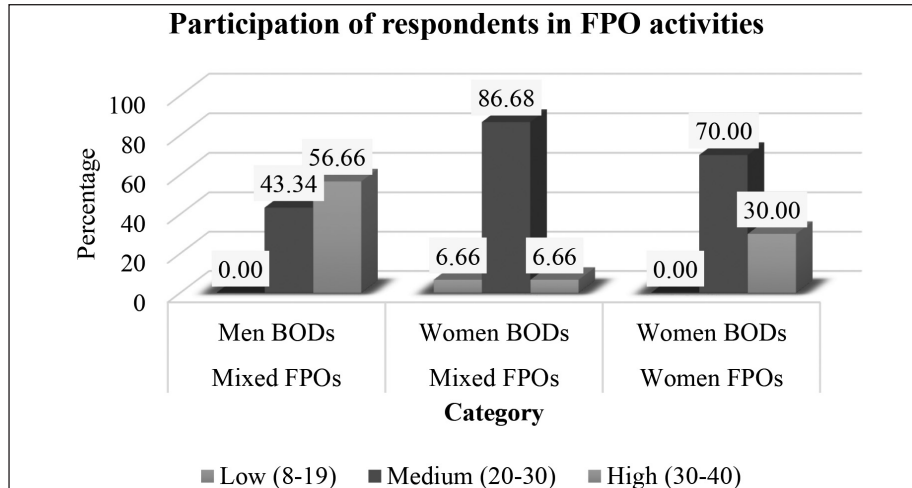


Fig. 1 Distribution of respondents according to their participation in FPO activities

The data pertaining from Figure 1 reported that among men BoDs in mixed FPOs, majority (56.66 %) of the respondents belonged to high participation in FPO activities followed by medium (43.34 %) and none of the respondents belonged to low level of participation in FPO activities. Among women BoDs in mixed FPOs, majority (86.68 %) of the respondents belonged to medium level of participation group, and very meagre percentage of the respondents belonged to low and high level of participation in FPO activities with the percentages of 06.66 per cent each respectively. Regarding women BoDs in women FPOs, majority (70.00 %) of the respondents had medium level of participation in FPO activities, 30.00 per cent of the respondents belonged to high level of participation and none of the respondents belonged to low level of the participation in FPO activities.

The findings might be due to the fact that male BoDs in mixed FPOs might be more involved in leadership positions and decision-making duties, which would increase their level of involvement and engagement in FPO activities. Most of the BoDs believe that with more participation in FPO they may get more material benefits from the FPOs. Another probable reason might be that many of them thought that membership led to social recognition and the improvement of their socioeconomic and psychological circumstances.

Leadership qualities

Based on the leadership qualities, the respondents were categorized into three categories i.e., low (10-23), medium (24-36) and high (37-50).

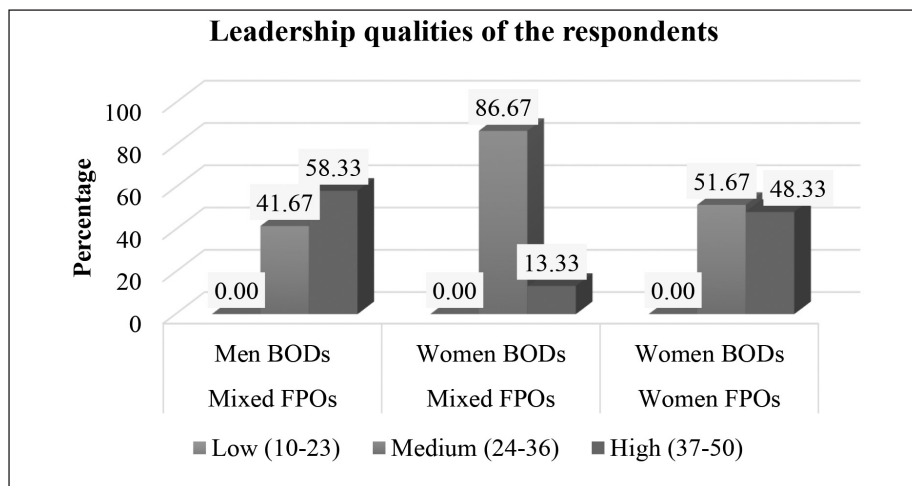


Fig. 2 : Distribution of respondents according to their leadership qualities

From the Fig. 2, the results highlighted that in mixed FPOs, among men BoDs majority (58.33 %) of the respondents had high level of leadership qualities followed by medium level of leadership qualities (41.67 %). None of the respondents had low level of leadership qualities. In women BoDs, majority (86.67 %) of the respondents belonged to medium level of the leadership qualities, 13.33 per cent of the respondents had high level and none of the respondents had low level of leadership qualities. With regard to women BoDs in women FPOs, just above half (51.67 %) of the respondents had medium level of leadership qualities followed by high level (48.33 %) and none of the respondents had low level of leadership qualities.

The probable reason for the medium to high leadership abilities among respondents might be due to the collectivization of activities in FPOs. As BoDs, their

involvement enhanced their psychological traits, leading to significant personal growth. By observing and participating in FPO activities, BoDs subconsciously develop leadership skills to communicate with the other BoDs and FPO members.

The results were in line with the study of Darshan (2019) in which they stated that majority (37.33 %) of the respondents had medium level of leadership ability followed by high (33.33 %) and low (29.33 %).

Decision making ability

Based on the ability of the respondents to take the decision regarding FPO activities, the respondents were categorised into three categories namely low (06-14), medium (15-22) and high (23-30).

n1=60, n2=60, n3=60, n=180

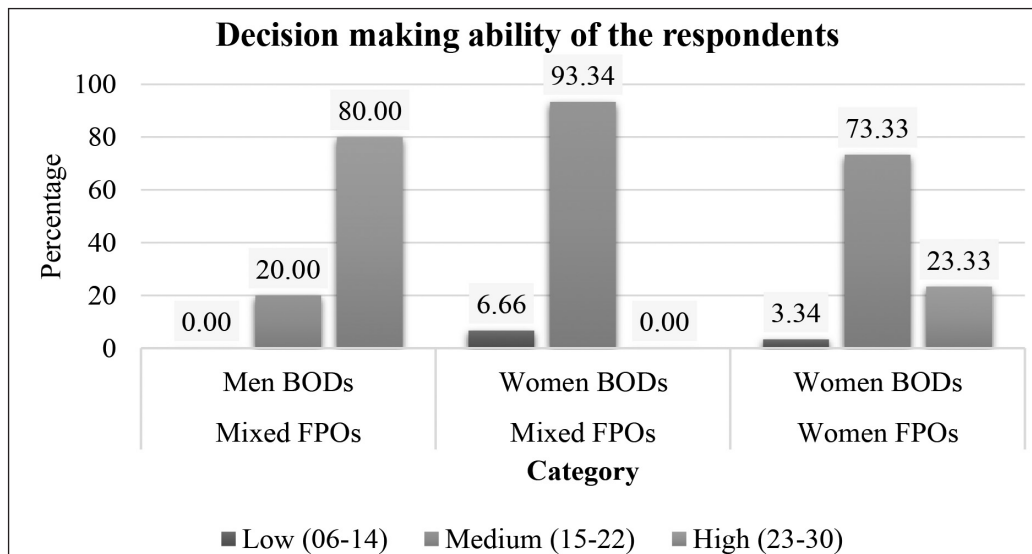


Fig. 3 : Distribution of respondents according to their decision-making ability

It was observed from the Figure 3 that with respect to mixed FPOs, majority (80.00 %) of the men BoDs belonged to high level of decision making ability and remaining 20.00 per cent of respondents fall under medium level of category. None of the respondents belonged to low level category. While, among women BoDs in mixed FPOs, majority (93.34 %) of the respondents belonged to medium level of decision-making category and only meagre percentage (06.66 %) of the respondents had low level of decision-making ability. None of the respondents fall under high decision making category. With regard to women BoDs in women FPOs, majority (73.33 %) of the respondents had medium level of decision-making ability followed by high (23.33 %) and low (03.34 %).

The findings may be due to the fact that male BoDs may be better at making decisions when they are more involved in leadership roles within FPO activities due to prevailing social hierarchies. However, because of men in charge of making decisions about farm-related activities, women BoDs in both FPOs had a medium degree of decision-making capacity.

Risk bearing ability

Based on the ability of the BoDs to take the risk in FPO activities, the respondents were categorized into three categories namely low (7-16), medium (17-25) and high (26-35).

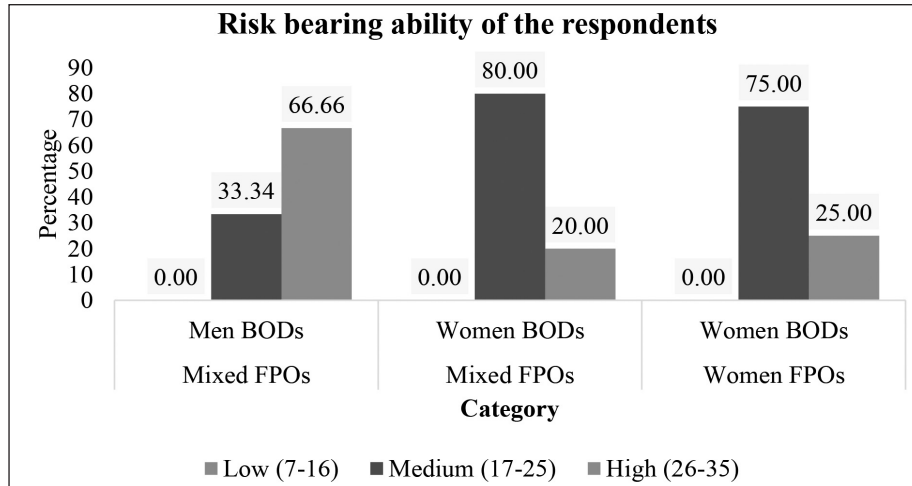


Fig. 4 : Distribution of respondents according to their risk bearing ability

From the Fig. 4 it was mentioned that regarding mixed FPOs, majority (66.66 %) of the men BoDs belonged to high-risk category followed medium (33.34 %) and none of the respondents had low level of risk bearing ability. Among women BoDs, majority (80.00 %) of the respondents had medium level of risk bearing ability and only 20.00 per cent belonged to high risk bearing ability. With concern to women BoDs in women FPOs, three fourth (75.00 %) of the respondents belonged to medium risk bearing category and remaining one fourth (25.00 %) of the respondents had high risk bearing ability. None of the women BoDs from both mixed and women led FPOs belonged to low risk bearing ability.

This might be due to the reason that men are more

often encouraged or expected to take bold financial risks. The another reason might be that most of the BoDs of FPOs view farming as a business than merely an occupation which made them to take risks. Along with it, the resources and support provided by FPOs have likely enabled them to make calculated risks by understanding potential consequences. The results were in line with the study conducted by Suriyapriya (2022).

Economic motivation

It referred as economic and financial incentives for the respondents to actively participate in and manage the organization. Based on the scores, the respondents were classified into three categories namely, low (6-14), medium (15-22), and high (23-30).

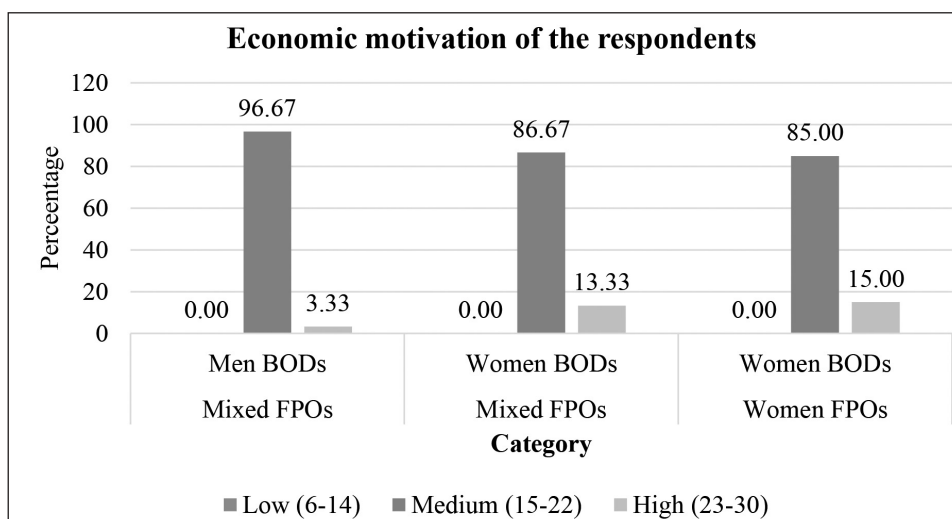


Fig. 5 : Distribution of respondents according to their economic motivation

Fig. 5 indicated that among men BoDs in mixed FPO, majority (96.67 %) of the respondents had medium level of economic motivation and only meagre percentage (03.33 %) of the respondents belonged to high level of economic motivation. In case of women BoDs, majority (86.67 %) of the respondents had medium level of economic motivation and remaining 13.33 per cent of respondents belonged to high level of economic motivation category. With respect to women BoDs in women FPOs, majority (85.00 %) of the respondents belonged to medium level of economic motivation category and remaining 15.00 per cent of respondents belonged to high level of economic motivation. None of the BoDs from mixed and women FPOs had low level of economic motivation.

It was evident from the study that the BoDs of FPOs exhibited a moderate level of economic motivation. This could be because the FPOs provided them with financial stability, assisted them in reaching their objectives and improving their socio-economic status, all of which may increase their economic status. The study was in line with the Chopade *et al.* (2019); Patel *et al.*, (2018).

Trainings undergone

It referred to the number of trainings attended and received by the Board of Directors of each FPO. Based on the response, the information was categorized and presented below.

Table 1 : Distribution of respondents according to their trainings undergone

(n=180)

Sr. No.	Trainings Undergone	Mixed FPO				Women FPO	
		Men BoDs (60)		Women BoDs (60)		Women BoDs (60)	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	BoDs training (5 days)	60	100.00	57	95.00	60	100.00
2	Legal Compliances (3 days)	60	100.00	07	11.66	33	55.00
3	Book of Accounts (3 days)	60	100.00	11	18.33	33	55.00
4	Business plan (1 day)	60	100.00	00	0.00	60	100.00
5	AGM process (1 day)	40	66.66	39	65.00	32	53.33
6	MoU and AoA (1 day)	56	93.33	57	95.00	57	95.00
7	Input Output Business (2 days)	28	46.66	00	00	27	45.00
8	Packaging & Marketing (3 days)	16	26.66	00	00	19	31.66
9	E-Nam Training (3 days)	10	16.66	00	0.00	0.00	0.00

* Multiple responses were taken

It could be observed from the table 1 that cent (100.00 %) per cent of the men BoDs in mixed FPOs attended BoDs training, legal compliances, book of accounts, and business plan trainings each followed by MoU & AoA (93.33 %), AGM process (66.66 %), input output business (46.66 %), packaging & marketing (26.66 %) and only 16.66 per cent of the respondents attended E-Nam training. Regarding women BoDs, majority (95.00 %) of the respondents attended BoDs trainings and MoU & AoA trainings each followed by AGM process (65.00 %), book of accounts (18.33 %) and only 11.66 per cent of respondents attended legal compliances. None of the respondents attended business planning, input & output business, packing & marketing and E-NAM trainings. With respect to women BoDs in women FPOs, cent (100.00 %) per cent of the respondents attended each BoDs training and business plan followed by MoU & AoA (95.00 %), legal compliances (55.00 %), book of accounts (55.00 %), AGM process (53.00 %), input & output business (45.00 %), packaging & marketing (31.66 %). Whereas, none of the women respondents from women BoDs attended E-Nam

training. The results were in line with Sawairam (2016); Saikia *et al.*, (2024); Machapathri *et al.*, (2024); Purnima *et al.*, (2023).

Hence, it was concluded that majority of BoDs of FPOs have attended most of the trainings. This may be due to the fact that NABARD organised BoDs training and FPO working process trainings to all the BoDs during formation of FPOs. But overall, men BoDs attended more training compared to women BoDs in mixed and women FPOs due to lack of interest, awareness and support to women BoDs which might result in low participation of women in trainings.

Mass media exposure

It refers to the respondents’ exposure to various mass media channels. In this study, mass media exposure was assessed based on the frequency of their utilization by the BoDs of FPOs. Based on the scores, respondents were classified into three categories namely low (1-6), medium (7-12) and high (13-18).

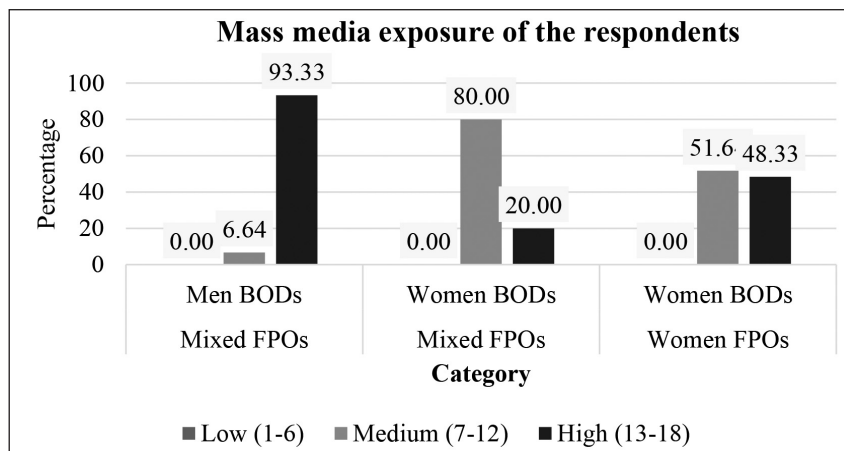


Fig. 6 : Distribution of respondents according to their mass media exposure

From the findings of the Fig. 6 it was observed that among men BoDs in mixed FPOs, majority (93.33 %) of the respondents belonged to high level of media exposure and only 06.67 per cent of the respondents had medium level of mass media exposure. Regarding women BoDs in mixed FPOs, majority (80.00 %) of the respondents belonged to medium level of media exposure. Whereas, 20.00 per cent of the respondents belonged to high level of mass media exposure. With regard to women BoDs in women FPOs, nearly half (51.67 %) of the respondents had medium level of mass media exposure followed by high (48.33 %) level. None of the respondents from mixed and women FPOs belonged to low level of mass media exposure.

Men BoDs had higher mass media exposure because men often have better access to communication devices (e.g., smartphones, televisions, radios). The another reason might be that men may have higher education and digital skills,

which increases their ability to access and understand various media content including agricultural programs, news and market updates which was relevant to FPO activities. Women BoDs may have medium level of media exposure due to multitasking between household and FPO responsibilities, leading to reduced opportunities to engage with media content regularly compared to male BoDs. Another possible reason for the results might be that the BOD's knowledge on mass media helps them to interpret and utilize information sent by NABARD effectively, allowing them to make informed decisions regarding FPO activities.

Self-reliance

It referred to the ability of BoDs of FPOs to independently manage their personal, social, and economic resources without depending on external assistance. Based on the score, the respondents were classified into three groups i.e., low (8-13), medium (14-18) and high (19-24).

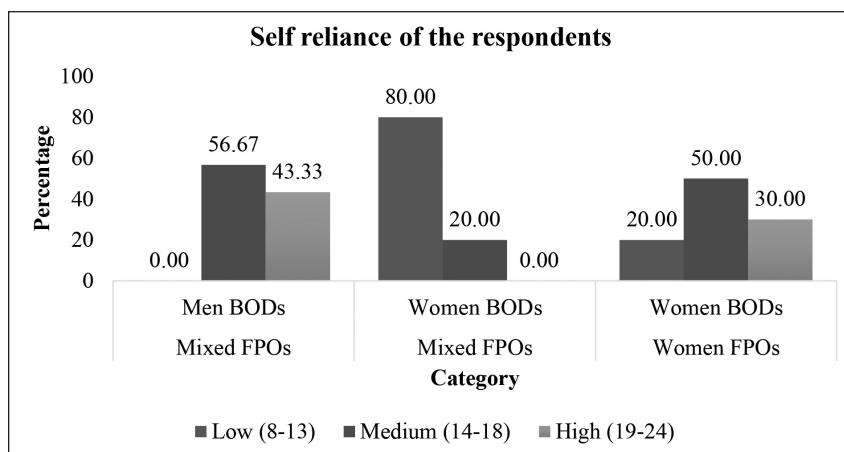


Fig. 7 : Distribution of respondents according to their self-reliance

It was evident from the Fig. 7 that in mixed FPO, majority (56.67 %) of the men BoDs belonged to medium level of self-reliance followed by high (43.33 %) and none of the respondents had low level of self-reliance. Regarding women BoDs, majority (80.00 %) of the respondents belonged to low level of self-reliance and 20.00 per cent of the respondents belonged to medium category. None of the respondents belonged to high category of self-reliance. With respect to women BoDs in women FPOs, half (50.00 %) of the respondents belonged to medium level of self-reliance followed by high (30.00 %) and low (20.00 %).

The probable reason might be that traditionally men are socialized to be decision-makers, which may foster for the greater sense of self-reliance. In contrast, women who reside in rural areas, may not have had many opportunities and encouragement to independently manage responsibilities or make autonomous decisions, limiting their development of self-reliance.

Table 2: Correlation analysis of Socio –Psychological variables with role performance of Board of Directors of Farmer Producer Organisations

Sr. No.	Socio –Psychological variable	
X ₁	Participation in FPO activities	0.630**
X ₂	Leadership qualities	0.625**
X ₃	Decision making ability	0.659**
X ₄	Risk bearing ability	0.359**
X ₅	Economic Motivation	0.205**
X ₆	Trainings Undergone	0.769**
X ₇	Mass media exposure	0.525**
X ₈	Self-Reliance	0.0406

**= Significant at 0.01 level of probability

It was evident from the table 2 that role performance was positively correlated at 1 per cent level of significance ($p < 0.01$) with participation in FPO activities ($r = 0.630^{**}$), leadership qualities ($r = 0.625^{**}$), decision making ability ($r = 0.659^{**}$), risk bearing ability ($r = 0.359^{**}$), economic motivation ($r = 0.205^{**}$), trainings undergone ($r = 0.769^{**}$) and mass media exposure ($r = 0.525^{**}$).

The results were in line with sahuo *et al.* (2022), Priyanka (2023), Dechamma *et al.* (2020), Laxman (2019), Karadipatil (2021)

CONCLUSION

Among men BoDs in mixed FPOs, majority of the respondents belonged to high level of participation in FPO activities, leadership qualities, decision making ability, and risk bearing ability. Whereas, Women BoDs in mixed and

women led FPO belonged to medium level of participation group, leadership qualities, decision making ability, risk bearing ability. The overall data also showed that, majority of the respondents from three categories (men and women in mixed FPO and women in women FPO) had medium level of economic motivation

From the results, it was also found that men BoDs attended more trainings than women BoDs. Majority of the respondents belonged to medium level to low level of self-reliance. Therefore, critical need for more inclusive, balanced, and targeted training programs particularly for women BoDs to ensure equitable capacity development, thereby fostering greater resilience and sustainability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) From the results it was found that men BoDs attended more trainings than women BoDs. Therefore, critical need for more inclusive, balanced, and targeted training programs particularly for women BoDs to ensure equitable capacity development.
- (2) Respondents belonged to medium level to low level of self-reliance. Therefore, development programs should place greater emphasis on building confidence, skills, and access to resources to elevate more individuals into the high self-reliance category, thereby fostering greater resilience and sustainability

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Authors are greatly acknowledged to greatly acknowledged to Professor Jayashankar Telangana Agricultural University, Hyderabad and all the reviewers for providing the necessary facilities and the suggestions / modifications to carry out the quality research work in the present form.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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Received : April 2025 : Accepted : June 2025