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A study on skill gap of member farmers of farmer producer organisations in Tripura

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Abstract

This paper aims to understand the skill gaps of the member farmers of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) in Tripura. For the study, 5 (five) FPOs were purposively selected viz., Satadol Fish Farmers Producer Company Limited, Bagma Agri Producer Company Limited, Chaudhadevta Organic Producer Company Limited, Chokreng Organic Farmers Producer Company Limited, and Hillstop Horti Producer Company Limited. From which 20 member farmers were randomly selected from each FPOs. Thus, a total of 100 member farmers respondents were selected for the study. Skill gap of the member farmers were identified to know their gap areas for training needs by using Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS). The topmost areas of training needs for the Satadol Fish Farmers Producer Company Limited were in pest and disease management skills (MWDS=5.4). For Bagma Agri Producer Company Limited, the topmost areas of training needs for the bee farmers were in control & prevention of pest and disease (MWDS=2.7) and for the livestock farmers were found to be disease control and their prevention (MWDS=11.31). The topmost areas of training needs for Chaudhadevta Organic Producer Company Limited for the horticulture farmers were in pest and disease management skill (MWDS=4.81). The topmost areas of training needs for Chokreng Organic Farmers Producer Company Limited were in handling of tools and equipment for the paddy farmers (MWDS=7.82) whereas the topmost areas of training needs for Hillstop Horti Producer Company Limited were in pest and disease management skill (MWDS=8.82). The current study will assist member farmers of Tripura's FPO in improving their efficacy and changing their means of subsistence.

Keywords: Skill gap, member, farmers, mean weighted discrepancy score, FPOs, training needs

Introduction

Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) play an important role in improving the bargaining power, market access and incomes of small and marginal farmers, but their effectiveness is often limited by a clear skill gap among members and office bearers. Many FPOs face shortages in managerial ability, business planning, digital literacy, ability to use modern market platforms which in turn weakens competitiveness and sustainability. This gap also affects not only individual farmers but also the overall performance of the FPOs. When members are unable to use digital tools, understand market demand, or manage collective operations efficiently, the organisations struggle to grow and deliver benefits to its members. Bridging these gaps requires structured capacity building, professional management, regular training and continued handholding support from government, NGOs and private partners. Therefore, identifying and addressing skill gaps through training and capacity building is essential for making FPOs more sustainable and effective.

Dehariya *et al.* (2025) ^[1] in his research, came to the

conclusion that a comparison of FPO members and non-members clearly showed that FPO participation is linked to notable gains in knowledge, decision-making skills, and general access to agricultural resources. He went on to say that FPO members showed noticeably higher levels of knowledge on millet production technologies, which can be linked to increased exposure to peer learning and institutional support inside the organization. Strengthening FPO capability in aggregation, processing, and market connections supports persistent income improvements and system efficiency, according to research by Sangappa *et al.*, (2026) ^[8]. According to Sajina *et al.*, (2026) ^[9], skill and competency improvement is therefore critically essential for FPOs to become more proficient. Goswami and Ahmed (2025) ^[2] highlight the necessity for focused capacity-building programs and moderate governance approaches. Increasing board members' understanding of governance and compliance is crucial for the long-term viability of the FPOs. According to Nikam *et al.*, (2019) ^[4], FPOs facilitate farmers' access to broader markets, but they have organizational and leadership challenges. According to Venkattakumar (2019)

^[10], strong governance frameworks and expert management techniques are critical to the long-term viability of such organization. Few empirical studies reveal favorable outcomes, such as directors' comprehension of the company's long-term goals and their effective guidance to their staff, which ultimately lead to overall performance evaluation. The research assesses the effectiveness of FPO boards. Compared to the management of non-functional FPOs, Singh (2022) ^[3] discovered that the management of functional FPOs had greater risk-bearing ability, more economic motivation, and more creativity. Compared to non-functional FPOs, functional FPO managers possess superior business acumen.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Tripura during 2023-24. A total number of 5 currently working FPOs which are at least three years old and having more than 500 members were purposively picked. Skill gap defines the circumstance in which workers skills are incompetent for executing the task (Shravan *et al.*, 2019) ^[6]. Skill gap was one of the important variables of the study. For this study, the skill-gap analysis as described by Wentling (1992) ^[11] was used to ascertain farmer's skill gap in apiculture/ bee rearing, livestock farming, horticultural crop, cereals, and fish production in addition to management of their farms. From a list of selected and relevant competencies in agricultural production in addition to farm management activities, which were listed by relevant literatures, consultation with experts as well as discussion with farmers in pilot study, farmers were asked to state their perceived levels of competence and importance attached to these activities and was computed using a 5 point Likert-type scale. Competence was assessed on a scale of very high competent = 5, high competent = 4, average competent = 3, little competent = 2, not competent at all = 1. To identify the importance attached to these activities, another 5 point Likert-type scale with scale very high important, high Important, average important, little important and not important at all with scores 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively was used to compute the perceived levels of importance placed on each of the listed activities (Solomon, 2008). An overall mean score was then calculated for competence and importance for all items on the schedule. From the results, the skill gap of respondents was identified using the methodology developed by Saha *et al.*, (2022) ^[7]. According to the methodology, skill gap is computed by finding the Mean Weighted Discrepancy Scores (MWDS) of perceived importance and competence and multiplying each discrepancy with the mean importance rating. The competencies are then ranked on the basis of the weighted scores. The greater or higher the difference, the higher the need for extension education or training. For the purpose of this study, a threshold of two thirds of MWDS as used by Saha *et al.*, (2022) ^[7] was used to determine and establish the training needs of respondents. Thus a variable with MWDS

of less than two thirds of the entire respondents' mean would not require training.

Results and Discussion

Skill gap analysis of Farmers

There are different skill domains for different farmers such as fish farmers, bee keeping farmers, livestock /cattle farmers, horticulture farmers etc. The data allows us to examine not only the skill possessed by the farmers but also help us identify areas of training needed by them.

Skill gap of member farmers of Satadol Fish Farmers Producer Company Limited

Analysis on the skill gap of the fish farmers of Satadol Fish Farmers Producer Company Limited using Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) and their ranking are presented in the table 1 below. A mean weight discrepancy score of 2.16 was adopted for the respondents training needs. Out of 21 production and allied activities, the analysis revealed that respondents will require trainings in ten (10) areas. The topmost areas of training needs were in pest and disease management skill (MWDS = 5.4), water quality management (MWDS = 4.3), selection of quality seed, species and their stocking density (MWDS = 4.2), fish seed production & hatchery management skills (MWDS = 3.3) and fertilisers, manuring and liming management (MWDS = 3.2). The respondent's strong demand for training in these areas may indicate that farming's quality and quantity need to be improved. As a growing agricultural practice among Tripura's farmers, fish farming is important for employment, income generation, and nutrition. Having expertise in these fields can help farmers produce more and make more income. Farmers must acquire the skills necessary to manage profitable farming operations, including pest and disease control. Farmers may find it challenging to control pests and diseases if they lack the necessary expertise in these areas. Fish farming relies heavily on the maintenance of water quality. Production is directly correlated with the choice of high-quality seed, species, and appropriate fish stocking ratios. Lack of experience with high-quality seeds, species to stock, and stocking ratios may be the cause of farmers' challenges in these areas. When it comes to fish farming, stocking density is crucial. The fish won't grow correctly if the stocking density is higher than the pond's carrying capacity. Because there is such a large disparity between the supply and demand for fish seed in these places, the study finds a strong need for training in fish seed production and hatchery management skills. Farmers were shown to be interested in starting hatcheries, nevertheless. Furthermore, the majority of fish farmers are unaware of the proper dosages for applying liming, manure, and fertilisers to their ponds. FPOs must thereby provide the necessary instruction and direction in the aforementioned areas.

Table 1: Skill gap of member farmers of Satadol Fish Farmers Producer Company Limited (n=20)

Sl. No.	Member's Skills	Competence Level		Importance level		MWDS	Rank
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1.	Pest and disease management skill	3.1	0.85	4.4	0.59	5.4*	I
2.	Water quality management	2.2	0.65	3.5	0.76	4.3*	II
3.	Selection of quality seed, species and their stocking density	3.5	0.51	4.4	0.68	4.2*	III
4.	Fish seed production & hatchery management skills	2.6	0.50	3.5	0.48	3.3*	IV
5.	Fertilisers, manuring and liming management	2.2	1.32	3.2	0.52	3.2*	V
6.	Fish based integrated farming skills	2.2	1.28	3.1	1.03	2.9*	VI
7.	Feed and feeding management skills	3.4	0.59	4.1	0.78	2.9*	VI
8.	Farm business and economics	2.8	0.76	3.5	0.76	2.5*	VII
9.	Fish pond construction	3.5	0.88	4.1	0.85	2.5*	VII
10.	Handling and processing skills	3.8	0.95	4.3	0.80	2.2*	VIII
11.	Fish spoilage and quality assessment skills	3.0	0.97	3.5	1	1.9	IX
12.	e-extension competence skills	3.9	0.71	4.3	0.92	1.7	X
13.	Post harvesting skills	3.5	0.88	3.9	0.91	1.6	XI
14.	Hazard management skills	3.4	0.50	3.8	0.89	1.5	XII
15.	Entrepreneurial skills	3.2	0.95	3.5	1.19	1.1	XIII
16.	Team work skills	2.1	0.96	2.5	0.82	1.0	XIV
17.	Interpersonal skills	3.9	0.71	4.1	0.78	1.0	XIV
18.	Sorting and grading skills	3.5	1.23	3.7	0.92	0.7	XV
19.	Harvesting skills	3.4	0.94	3.5	0.94	0.4	XVI
20.	Negotiation skills	3.6	0.94	3.6	0.88	0.2	XVII
21.	Communication skills	2.8	1.00	2.9	0.57	0.1	XVIII

Training need (score ≥ 2.16)

a) Skill gap of member bee farmer of Bagma Agri Producer Company Limited

Analysis on the skill gap of bee farmer of Bagma Agri Producer Company Limited using Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) and their ranking are presented in the table 2. A mean weighted discrepancy score of 1.75 was adopted for the training needs of respondents. Out of 15 production and allied activities, the analysis revealed that respondents will require trainings in four (4) areas. The topmost areas of training needs were in Control & prevention of pest & disease (MWDS =2.7), Handling of equipment and tools (MWDS=2.1), e-extension competence skills (MWDS =1.9) and Arranging bee boxes and spacing (MWDS=1.8). The practice of beekeeping is ideally suited to the idea of

small-scale agricultural growth. It is a labor-intensive project that is easily integrated into more extensive ones. Because honey has a high economic value, apiculture has become a lucrative endeavour. The most important training required for beekeeping and apiculture businesses is pest and disease control and prevention, as many farmers lack the necessary skills in these areas. Finding an experienced beekeeper with equipment and tool handling skills is somewhat challenging. Because they have less education, the majority of farmers are unaware of the e-extension competency skills that they should use in their operations. To obtain the best honey, some crops can be helpful. Thus, choosing the right location, setting up the bee boxes, and maintaining their spacing are essential for producing a good amount of honey.

Table 2: Skill gap of member bee farmer of Bagma Agri Producer Company Limited (n=10)

Sl. No.	Member's Skills	Competence Level		Importance level		MWDS	Rank
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1.	Control & prevention of pest & disease	1.7	0.67	2.7	0.73	2.7*	I
2.	Handling of equipment and tools	3.7	0.67	4.2	0.78	2.1*	II
3.	e-extension competence skills	3.3	0.48	3.8	0.78	1.9*	III
4.	Arranging bee boxes and spacing	4.1	0.73	4.5	0.70	1.8*	IV
5.	Proper site selection	2.8	0.91	3.2	0.42	1.28	V
6.	Queen clipping - removing a portion of one or both front wings of a queen to prevent her from flying.	3.5	0.70	3.8	0.91	1.14	VI
7.	Application of medicines /antibiotics and fumigants/ chemicals	3.8	0.91	4.1	0.99	1.23	VII
8.	Marketing aspect of honey & wax	4.3	0.67	4.5	0.70	0.9	VIII
9.	Record keeping	2.5	0.56	2.8	0.63	0.84	IX
10.	Feed formulation and feeding	3.9	0.87	4.1	0.87	0.82	X
11.	Team work skills	3.9	0.99	4.1	0.87	0.82	X
12.	Communication skills	3.8	0.78	4	0.94	0.8	XI
13.	Entrepreneurial skills	4.1	0.87	4.2	0.63	0.42	XII
14.	Interpersonal skills	4	0.81	4.1	0.87	0.41	XIII
15.	Negotiation skills	3.6	0.51	3.7	0.94	0.37	XIV

Training need (score ≥ 1.75)

b) Skill gap of member Livestock farmer of Bagma Agri Producer Company Limited

Analysis on the skill gap of cattle/ livestock farmer of Bagma Agri Producer Company Limited using Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) and their rankings are presented in the table 3. A mean weighted discrepancy score of 1.69 was adopted for the training needs of the respondents. Out of 20 production and allied activities, the analysis revealed that respondents will require trainings in five (5) areas. The topmost areas of training needs were in diseases control and their prevention (MWDS =14.4), Infertility problem identification (MWDS=14.19), Oestrous cycle and time of mating (MWDS=13.76), Dehorning, deworming and Vaccination (MWDS=11.31) and Artificial insemination (MWDS=9.36). An important part of rural economy of the

state is the livestock farming. It is often known how important livestock is for producing meat, milk, manure, and other products that boost farmers' incomes. The primary issue is the emergence and spread of zoonotic illnesses, which cause significant losses in the livestock industry. The identification of infertility issues, the oestrous cycle, and the timing of mating were discovered to be the next issues facing cattle farmers. Livestock farmers can avoid significant losses by preventing common diseases by immunising their animals on time. Livestock dehorning is done for safety purposes and to keep the other farm animals safe. Artificial insemination, or AI, has numerous benefits. However, the farmers of Tripura were ignorant of AI's potential. Through FPOs, livestock farmers will gain additional benefits from education and knowledge on these subjects.

Table 3: Skill gap of member Livestock farmer of Bagma Agri Producer Company Limited (n=10)

Sl. No.	Member's Skills	Competence Level		Importance level		MWDS	Rank
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1.	Diseases control and their prevention	1.2	0.42	3.9	0.87	11.31*	I
2.	Infertility problem identification	1.1	0.31	3.6	1.34	9.36*	II
3.	Oestrous cycle and time of mating	2.7	1.41	4	0.94	5.20*	III
4.	Dehorning, deworming and Vaccination	3.40	0.76	4.35	0.81	4.13*	IV
5.	Artificial insemination	3.30	0.99	4.25	0.85	4.04*	V
6.	Pregnancy diagnosis	3.50	0.60	4.25	0.91	3.19*	VI
7.	Care of calf, milking cow and before breeding	3.5	0.70	4	0.94	2*	VII
8.	Balanced feeding, Feeding of different age groups and nutritional management	4	0.66	4.3	0.82	1.29	VIII
9.	Selection of breed	4.3	0.82	4.5	0.70	0.9	IX
10.	Record keeping	4.2	0.78	4.4	0.69	0.88	X
11.	Construction of scientific housing and sanitation	4.1	0.87	4.3	0.82	0.86	XI
12.	e-extension competence skills	4	0.81	4.2	0.78	0.84	XII
13.	Fodder varieties and their cultivation	3.9	0.73	4.1	0.87	0.82	XIII
14.	Castration	3.9	0.87	4.1	0.87	0.82	XIII
15.	Marketing of bulls & calves	3.9	0.87	4.1	0.87	0.82	XIII
16.	Negotiation skills	3.9	0.87	4.1	0.87	0.82	XIII
17.	Communication skills	1.6	0.84	1.9	0.87	0.57	XIV
18.	Entrepreneurial skills	4.2	0.91	4.3	0.82	0.43	XV
19.	Team work skills	4.2	0.63	4.3	0.82	0.43	XV
20.	Interpersonal skills	1.1	0.31	1.2	0.42	0.24	XVI

Training need (score ≥ 1.69)

Skill gap of member Horticulture farmer of Chauddadevta Organic Producer Company Limited

Analysis on the skill gap of the horticulture farmers of Chauddadevta Organic Producer Company Limited using Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) and their rankings are presented in the table 4. A mean weighted discrepancy score of 1.04 was adopted for the respondents training needs. Out of 17 production and allied activities, the analysis revealed that respondents will require trainings in four (4) areas. The topmost areas of training needs were in pest and disease management skill (MWDS=4.81), e-extension competence skills (MWDS=3.94), handling of tools and equipment (MWDS=2.57) and marketing/ branding (MWDS=1.40). Many farmers have serious issues with pests and diseases because they have an adverse effect on output. Enhanced e-extension competencies aid farmers in marketing their produce, providing advising services, and extending their agricultural reach. Farmers were found to lack e-

extension skills; this could be because of their low educational attainment and lack of training. Agriculture may operate more productively and produce more crops in a shorter amount of time by using farm tools and equipment. Marketing includes product delivery to customers as well as sales and promotion. It is the process of keeping and satisfying clients. By forming and establishing a brand in the minds of consumers, branding gives particular products significance. Turmeric, ginger, and pineapple are cultivated organically by the Chauddadevta Organic Producer Company Limited member farmer. They have been advocating for safe food and environmental practices and organic crops. It is difficult to produce goods that are cultivated organically, and farmers previously had little knowledge about the proper usage and dosage of organic fertilisers. The member farmers will benefit greatly from the inclusion of this subject in the Chauddadevta Organic Producer Company Limited training.

Table 4: Skill gap of member horticulture farmer of Chaudhadevta Organic Producer Company Limited (n = 20)

Sl. No.	Member's Skills	Competence Level		Importance level		MWDS	Rank
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1.	Pest and disease management skill	2.4	0.75	3.7	0.80	4.81*	I
2.	e-extension competence skills	2.7	0.65	3.75	0.85	3.94*	II
3.	Handling of tools and equipment	3.3	0.86	3.95	0.68	2.57*	III
4.	Marketing/ branding	3.65	0.89	4	0.79	1.40*	IV
5.	Soil and fertilisers	3.6	0.75	3.85	0.67	0.96	V
6.	Entrepreneurial skills	4.2	0.41	4.4	0.68	0.88	VI
7.	Post harvesting skills	4	0.79	4.2	0.81	0.84	VII
8.	Vegetable production	3.9	0.75	4.1	0.78	0.82	VIII
9.	Labour management	3.8	0.83	4	0.79	0.80	IX
10.	Communication skills	3.6	0.82	3.8	0.76	0.76	X
11.	Vegetable crop planning	3.4	0.59	3.6	0.75	0.72	XI
12.	Water management	3.4	0.68	3.55	0.94	0.53	XII
13.	Farm business and economics	2.5	0.82	2.65	0.93	0.40	XIII
14.	Team work skills	3.85	0.85	3.95	0.99	0.40	XIII
15.	Interpersonal skills	3.75	1.11	3.85	0.81	0.39	XIV
16.	Negotiation skills	3.55	0.75	3.65	0.87	0.37	XV
17.	Harvest and storage	3.3	1.03	3.4	0.82	0.34	XVI

Training need (score ≥ 1.04)

Skill gap of member Paddy farmer of Chokreng Organic Farmers Producer Company Limited

Analysis on the skill gap of the farmers of Chokreng Organic Producer Company Limited using Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) and their ranking are presented in the table 5. A mean weighted discrepancy score of 1.85 was adopted for the respondents training needs. Out of 21 production and allied activities, the analysis revealed that respondents will require trainings in five (5) areas. The topmost areas of training needs were in handling of tools and equipment (MWDS=7.82), pest and disease management skill (MWDS= 5.13), selection of varieties (MWDS=3.36), seed rate and spacing (MWDS= 2.63) and inter culture operation (MWDS= 1.48). Farmers' primary issue was determined to be with handling tools and equipment.

Investing in farm machinery allows farmers to earn more money while saving work and time. Aside from basic instruments, many farmers cannot afford machinery. These days, FPOs offer machinery for hire. Their business will be profitable if they provide training on what to use and how to utilise it. Pests and diseases have been reported to cause the most agricultural waste in India since they have a significant impact on production. The choice of paddy types is crucial in order to guarantee both good yield and climate adaptation. The health of the paddy as a whole is impacted by knowing the right seed rate and spacing. Paddy competes with other plants for scarce food and water due to high densities. Weed management and soil aeration are achieved through interculture operations.

Table 5: Skill gap of member Paddy farmer of Chokreng Organic Farmers Producer Company Limited (n = 20)

Sl. No.	Member's Skills	Competence Level		Importance level		MWDS	Rank
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1.	Handling of tools and equipment	2.90	0.78	4.60	0.68	7.82*	I
2.	Pest and disease management skill	2.45	0.6	3.8	0.69	5.13*	II
3.	Selection of varieties	3.40	0.5	4.2	0.75	3.36*	III
4.	Seed rate and spacing	3.05	0.82	3.75	1.20	2.63*	IV
5.	Inter culture operation	4.10	1.07	4.50	0.44	1.80*	V
6.	Post harvesting skills	4.15	0.44	4.50	0.82	1.58	VI
7.	Seed treatment	3.30	0.75	3.7	0.96	1.48	VII
8.	Selection of soil type and land preparation	2.75	0.85	3.2	0.76	1.44	VIII
9.	Marketing/ branding	3.70	0.97	4.05	0.99	1.42	IX
10.	Harvest and storage	4.30	0.92	4.6	0.68	1.38	X
11.	Crop planning	4.10	0.85	4.4	0.68	1.32	XI
12.	e-extension competence skills	4.40	1.05	4.65	0.58	1.16	XII
13.	Fertiliser management	4.15	0.81	4.4	0.75	1.10	XIII
14.	Water management	2.35	0.67	2.75	1.11	1.10	XIII
15.	Farm business and economics	3.70	0.80	3.95	1.09	0.99	XIV
16.	Negotiation skills	3.60	0.82	3.85	0.71	0.96	XV
17.	Entrepreneurial skills	4.35	0.81	4.55	0.68	0.91	XVI
18.	Interpersonal skills	3.95	0.82	4.15	0.87	0.83	XVII
19.	Labour management	4.35	1.13	4.45	0.59	0.45	XVIII
20.	Communication skills	4.15	0.74	4.2	1.15	0.21	XIX
21.	Team work skills	1.85	1.30	1.9	1.37	0.09	XX

Training need (score ≥ 1.85)

Skill gap of member Horticulture farmer of Hillstop Horti Producer Company Limited

Analysis on the skill gap of the farmers of Hillstop Horti Producer Company Limited using Mean Weighted Discrepancy Score (MWDS) and their ranking are presented in the table 6. A mean weighted discrepancy score of 1.80 was adopted for the respondents training needs. Out of 17 production and allied activities, the analysis revealed that respondents will require trainings in six (6) areas. The topmost 3 areas of training needs identified were in pest and disease management skill (MWDS=8.82), e-extension. Production declines as a result of illnesses and pests. Farmers might minimise enormous losses if they received this kind of

training. E-extension will greatly contribute to farmers' growth. Because e-extension has expanded market opportunities and yields, it has benefited agricultural production and development. Long-term benefits to farmers will result from additional training on this subject. It was discovered that farmers lacked e-extension skills because of either a lack of training or a poor educational attainment. Utilising agricultural implements and machinery enhances farming's efficiency and yield. It may lessen the amount of labour required and facilitate farming. Adding this topic in training through Hillstop Horti Producer Company Limited will help the member farmers in many ways.

Table 6: Skill gap of member Horticulture farmer of Hillstop Horti Producer Company Limited (n=20)

Sl. No.	Member's Skills	Competence Level		Importance level		MWDS	Rank
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1.	Pest and disease management skill	2.25	0.85	4.30	0.92	8.82*	I
2.	e-extension competence skills	2.60	1.14	4.00	1.02	5.60*	II
3.	Handling of tools and equipment	3.40	0.76	4.35	0.81	4.13*	III
4.	Water management	3.30	0.99	4.25	0.85	4.04*	IV
5.	Soil and fertilisers management	3.50	0.60	4.25	0.91	3.19*	V
6.	Marketing/ branding	3.90	0.85	4.35	0.81	1.96*	VI
7.	Crop planning	3.80	0.83	4.15	1.26	1.45	VII
8.	Farm business and economics	3.40	0.50	3.75	1.37	1.31	VIII
9.	Harvest and storage	4.00	0.79	4.20	1.19	0.84	IX
10.	Production	3.80	0.83	4.00	1.07	0.80	X
11.	Labour management	3.70	0.65	3.90	0.96	0.78	XI
12.	Post harvesting skills	4.10	0.91	4.25	0.85	0.64	XII
13.	Team work skills	4.10	0.78	4.25	0.85	0.64	XII
14.	Negotiation skills	3.80	0.76	3.95	0.88	0.59	XIII
15.	Entrepreneurial skills	4.35	0.81	4.45	0.75	0.45	XIV
16.	Communication skills	4.20	0.76	4.30	0.86	0.43	XV
17.	Interpersonal skills	4.00	0.64	4.10	0.78	0.41	XV

Training need (score ≥ 1.80)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the skill gap among FPO farmers is a major barrier to effective organisation, better market access and sustainable business growth. Most gaps are seen in pest and disease management skill, disease control and their prevention and handling tools and equipment. This gap shows that farmers may have strong production knowledge but they often lack in those mention skills. Therefore, regular training, handholding support and capacity building programmes for both member farmers and office bearers are essential to improve FPO performance and long term viability.

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