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Using oral communication instructions to improve marketing and financial management skills of sweet potato farmers

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Abstract

Purpose – The aim of this study was to determine the impact of oral communication in improving the marketing and financial management skills of sweet potato farmers.

Design/methodology/approach – The study used a quasi-experimental design with a pre- and post-test approach. The sample was 540 sweet potato farmers that were randomly assigned to training (n = 270) and no-training groups (n = 270) with analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) as the method of data analysis. While the training group received oral training sessions for three farming seasons beginning in 2019, 2020 and 2021, the no-training group did not receive any intervention.

Findings – Before the training sessions, all the sweet potato farmers scored low on marketing skills like advertising, sales promotion and sales forecasting. Both groups also scored low on financial management skills like budgeting, investments, saving and controlling expenditures. Their annual income level was also low and both groups did not significantly differ. However, after the training and during the follow-up evaluation, the participants in the training group reported a significant improvement in their marketing skills and financial management skills. There was also an improvement in their income level from $238 (N109,480) at baseline to $523 (N240,580) after the training and $782 (N359,720) after the follow-up evaluation. On the other hand, the no-training group reported a staggered fluctuation in their income of $241 (N110,860) at baseline, $371(N170,660) during post-training evaluation and $214 (N98,440) at follow-up assessment.

Research limitations/implications – The first limitation is that the study examined only one crop. There is a need to pay attention to farmers of other crops for better understanding. Another limitation of the study is that the researchers examined only oral communication. There is a need to compare more than one training to understand which is more effective. Finally, the current study did not consider the moderating effect of other factors like the source of labour and expenses.

Originality/value – This study has shown that oral communication is an effective tool for promoting the acquisition of marketing and financial management skills and enhancing agribusiness.

Keywords Financial management skills, Oral communication, Marketing skills, Sweet potato farmers

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Low marketing and financial skills are regarded as serious problems facing farmers in developing countries. As a result of this problem, farmers are not able to harness the full benefits of their efforts and the middlemen and women have taken advantage of this problem to deprive farmers of the financial rewards of their efforts. Layade *et al.*'s (2017) study supports this assumption as the researchers found that farmers only get 36% of the reward for their farming as the remaining 64% goes to middlemen and women who are into agribusinesses. Onyia *et al.* (2023) note that poor knowledge of aspects of agribusiness accounts for the inability of farmers to benefit from their

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efforts. The implication is that farmers require training to improve their agribusiness skills so that they will be able to reap the reward of their efforts. Pyysiäinen *et al.* (2006) affirm that farmers need to be trained so that they can benefit from the outputs from their farms.

Sweet potato farmers were the focus of the current study. The researchers decided to focus on sweet potato farmers because of its capacity to generate income for farmers and improve their income level. Saptana *et al.* (2022) did a study and reported that sweet potato farming is financially profitable but added that farmers need to understand the market dynamics before they can benefit from sweet potato cultivation. The implication from the study of Saptana *et al.* is that sweet potato farmers require training so that they could be guided on the best ways of marketing their product as well as effectively managing their finances to improve their overall socio-economic status.

Marketing skills are considered important to sweet potato farmers because the possession of such skills will empower farmers to ensure that they push their products to the right places to the right people who will give them the right financial value for their products. Mudege *et al.* (2015) say that marketing skills are important for sweet potato farmers because such skills will assist them in making sure that they profit from sweet potato production. Without sound marketing skills, sweet potato farmers risk being cheated by middlemen and women, hence they may not be able to generate commensurate income from potato farming. This reality makes it imperative to suggest ways of assisting sweet potato farmers to improve their marketing skills.

Financial management skills are equally essential for sweet potato farmers so that they will be able to judiciously make use of income generated from the production and marketing of their products. Wulandari *et al.* (2023) opine that sweet potato farmers have low financial management skills which impact negatively on their income. Yusuf and Wuyah (2015) aver that improving the financial skills of sweet potato farmers is a useful way of assisting them so that they can make efficient use of their financial resources. The overall implication from the foregoing is that sweet potato farmers need training so that they will improve their marketing and financial management skills.

Oral communication has the potential to serve as a tool for training sweet potato farmers so that they scale up their marketing and financial management skills. Dunbar *et al.* (2006) aver that oral communication has the potential to serve as an instrument for training people to acquire relevant skills that will lead to their empowerment. Baccino *et al.* (2010) opine that through the instrument of oral communication, farmers can be trained to internalize skills that will make their lives better. Prabavathi and Nagasubramani (2018) aver that oral communication is mostly needed when there is the need for human touch in communication to avoid complexities. Prabavathi and Nagasubramani note further that oral communication ensures that messages are conveyed with the required pitch and tone with immediate feedback. Examining the impact of oral communication in improving marketing and financial management skills is important because it will provide empirical evidence that could guide policy and practice on ways of empowering farmers to make them self-sustaining and self-dependent. Such a study is also important to offer fresh perspectives in the literature on the empowerment of farmers through agribusiness.

Objectives of the study

The objective of this study was to determine the impact of oral communication in improving the marketing and financial management skills of potato farmers in Nigeria.

Literature review

Promoting marketing and financial management skills

Marketing skills can be defined as the mental competence to effectively move a product from production to the consumer. Cant (2012) says that marketing contributes to the success or

failure of small businesses. Eriksson and Hauer (2004) aver that marketing skills can be learnt through training because people are not born with such skills. Meera and Vinodan (2022) hold a similar opinion. Khan and Khan (2021) define marketing skills as the competence required to plan, stratify and consumers in the marketing process. The definition of Khan and Khan focuses more on a business organization than an individual who will need marketing skills to promote their goals and services. In this study, the researchers conceptualized marketing skills as the mental capabilities that enable sweet potato farmers to effectively move their products to consumers at profitable rates. Tindiwensi *et al.* (2020) found that farmers need marketing skills so that they can effectively connect with the market.

The acquisition of marketing skills is always a subject of interest in the literature. Usen *et al.* (2018) conducted a study to examine the marketing skill needs of undergraduates. The researchers sampled 165 respondents. The result of the study showed that the marketing skills needs of the sample were sales promotion, advertising and sales forecasting. The study of Usen *et al.* (2018) is relevant to the current study because it examined marketing skills. However, the researchers did not examine it from the perspective of sweet potato farmers. Additionally, the researchers did not examine it from the perspective of exploring ways of improving the marketing skills of the sample but concentrated on their marketing skill needs.

Hoang (2020) argues that training farmers to improve their marketing skills is one of the best ways of empowering them. The researcher did a study involving a total of 325 farmers in Vietnam and reported that training programmes were important to the marketing skills of farmers and encourage them to adopt mobile phones for marketing their agricultural products. Although the researcher was also able to highlight the importance of training programmes on the marketing skills of farmers, the study did not show how to improve the marketing skills of farmers. Just like the study of Usen *et al.* (2018), Hoang (2020) made use of survey design and did not offer empirical evidence on training to improve marketing skills. The study of Singh *et al.* (2015) is different from that of Usen *et al.* (2018) and Hoang (2020). This is because they (Singh *et al.*) examined the impact of a training programme on 900 farmers with particular reference to their knowledge on the marketing of goats, pigs and pest management. The result of the study showed that the training programme was effective in assisting the farmers to improve their marketing of the selected agricultural items. Despite this, Singh *et al.* did not examine potato farmers.

Another important skill that sweet potato farmers need is financial management skills. In this study, we defined financial management skills as the ability to efficiently utilize finances. Hamid and Loke (2020) define financial management skills as the ability to budget, stay within budget, save, invest and control expenditure in a manner that ensures stability in a person's financial health. Ksendzova *et al.* (2017) describe financial management as a process in which case individuals effectively convert their income into outcomes. Ksendzova *et al.* add that good financial management skills are related to financial decisions which reduce the proclivity of individuals to spend carelessly and accumulate debts.

Financial management skills can be developed through training programmes. Kirsten (2018) did a study to examine the impact of financial management skills programmes on the development of financial management skills among small businesses. The researcher applied a quasi-experimental design with single repeated measure. The result of the study showed that the training programme effectively improved the financial management skills of small business owners. The researcher then concluded that training programmes are needed to develop the financial management skills of individuals. Although the study of Kirsten (2018) has shown that training programmes are important to assist people to develop financial management skills, the researchers did not include farmers in the sample. Rivenbark (2007) conducted a study and reported that the case method can be used to effectively assist individuals to acquire financial management skills. However, just like the study of Kirsten, Rivenbark was not particular about farmers.

Jackson-Smith *et al.* (2004) conducted a study to examine the impact of financial management training on financial skills. The sample included a total of 167 farmers that received training in financial management. The researchers reported that the training was useful in improving financial management skills but was insufficient in improving income. The study of Jackson-Smith *et al.* included farmers in the sample, unlike that of Kirsten (2018) and Rivenbark (2017). However, potato farmers were not the focus of the study. Hayden *et al.* (2022) reported that the possession of financial skills assists farmers in financial decision-making. This highlights the need to train farmers so that will be equipped with relevant financial skills.

Study context

Sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas L*) is an important food item globally (Tang *et al.*, 2022) and it contains simple fermentable sugars such as fructose, glucose and sucrose. It also contains lipids, minimal proteins, dietary fibres as well as functional components (De Albuquerque *et al.*, 2019; Ferrari *et al.*, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2016). Also, sweet potato contains starch that can be useful for industrial purposes. These unique features make sweet potato plays a crucial role as a food item of choice in many countries, including Nigeria.

In Nigeria, sweet potato is boiled and consumed alongside other items like rice, cowpea and millet. Additionally, sweet potato flour is equally used as sweetening for local food items and it is also fried and consumed as chips and marketed in the urban areas (Tewe *et al.*, 2003). Tewe *et al.* further report that marketing was one of the challenges facing sweet potato farmers in Nigeria. The researchers then suggested that there was a need to assist sweet potato farmers so that they are able to effectively market their produce.

Nigeria is among the leading producers of sweet potatoes globally with an annual production capacity of 3.46 million tonnes (Omoare *et al.*, 2015). In terms of global ranking on sweet potato production, Nigeria ranks third, just after China and Uganda, respectively (Kathryn *et al.*, 2012). The large production of sweet potatoes in Nigeria is suggestive of its potential to reduce poverty and increase the income of farmers (Ahmad *et al.*, 2014). The study by Bose *et al.* (2020) revealed that sweet potato is profitable if properly marketed. This suggests that the profitability of sweet potatoes does not mean that farmers will automatically benefit from it. Rather, farmers need to possess some marketing and financial management skills before they can harness the potential of sweet potato cultivation. Sanusi *et al.* (2014) note that there is no stability in the price of sweet potato and knowledge of such fluctuation is essential for farmers to be able to benefit from sweet potato production. They argued further that the price of sweet potatoes is lower during the peak of harvest which is between July and January, but during off seasons like February to June, the prices are normally higher. The problem is how to educate sweet potato farmers so that they are able to effectively market their products and make money from it. Anyaegbunam and Nto (2011) conducted a study also identified marketing as a serious problem facing sweet potato farmers in Nigeria. Anyaegbunam and Nto reported that sweet potato is lucrative but farmers will need to possess marketing skills for them to make money from cultivating sweet potato. Gani *et al.* (2020) in a more recent study also identified marketing as one of the leading challenges facing sweet potato farmers in Nigeria. The implication of the above is that there is a need to develop ways of assisting sweet potato farmers so that they will improve their marketing skills and benefit from the financial rewards inherent in sweet potato farming. This is particularly important because literature (Iba and Lilavanichakul, 2021; Tripathi *et al.*, 2023) show that marketing is instrumental to successful agribusiness.

Theoretical framework

The human capital theory (HCT) was used to understand the impact of oral communication in improving the marketing and financial management skills of sweet potato farmers in Nigeria.

HCT was propounded in 1964 by Gary Stanley Backer and his associate. The fundamental postulation of the theory is that training people to acquire skills is an important strategy for human capital development (Goldin, 2014). HCT assumes that human beings are assets that need to be developed so that they are able to function and achieve their full potential. This means that sweet potato farmers need to be developed so that they will be able to harness the potential inherent in the cultivation of sweet potatoes. The theory argues that the only way to attain economic development is to develop people such that they are mentally capable to engage in economic activities and contribute to the development of society. Training people in skill acquisition is an important way of developing them. According to Inyang and Agwadu (2017), skill acquisition is a viable option in the development of human capital. Michael *et al.* (2016) say that it is only when people acquire skills that they will be able to contribute to economic activities. Ugwuanyi *et al.* (2023) applied the HCT to examine the effectiveness of small group communication in improving the business skills of victims of conflict and reported that the theory is a helpful framework for assessing ways of empowering people. Therefore, in this study, it is argued that oral communication intervention offers an opportunity to develop the human capital of sweet potato farmers. Based on this theory, the researchers hypothesized:

H1. Oral communication training will effectively improve the marketing skills of potato farmers.

H2. Oral communication training will effectively improve the financial management skills of potato farmers.

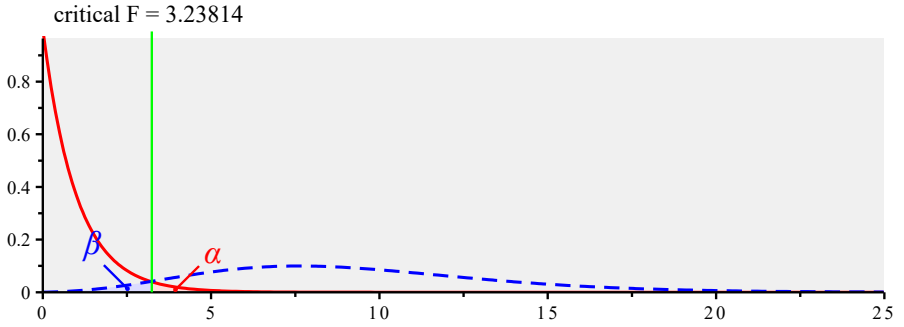
Methodology

The methodology of this study is presented under the following sub-headings:

Design: The researchers made use of a quasi-experiment design in this study with the use of pre-test-post state and follow-up approaches. This type of design is normally useful for studies that attempt to determine the impact of an intervention on humans in a non-laboratory setting (Obasi *et al.*, 2021; Okpara *et al.*, 2021).

Target population: The target population of this study was all the sweet potato farmers in Zaria local government area of Kaduna State. This area was considered appropriate for the study because a study conducted by Yusuf and Wuyah (2015) revealed that Zaria is one of the locations where sweet potato is cultivated in large quantities. There is no official list of sweet potato farmers in Zaria Local Government area so the researcher applied the following steps to develop a sample frame. First, the researchers purposively selected five villages based on the study of Yusuf and Wuyah (2015). The villages are: Tunkure, Dumbi, Dan Mallam, Pan Medina and Dutse Abba. In the second place, the researchers recruited five research administrators within the study area. The administrators were familiar with the study location and also spoke the local language. The study was announced at the square of the villages. Those who were interested in participating in the study were requested to fill out the consent form. The consent form requested information like the purpose of cultivation (commercial vs consumption), farm size (measured in hectares) and sources of labour. Initially, a total of 2452 sweet potato farmers indicated interest to participate in the study. However, they were screened and those who cultivated ($n = 292$) only for consumption were excluded. In the final analysis, the population of the study was 2,160 sweet potato farmers.

Sample size: A total of 540 sweet potato farmers constituted the sample size for the study. The G*power programme version 3.1 was used to arrive at the sample size (Faul *et al.*, 2007). The researchers set the effect size (η^2) as 0.01; power ($1 - \beta$) at 0.95 while $\alpha = 0.04$. The outcome revealed that a sample size of 540 was needed to determine statistical differences at 0.05 level of confidence. Figure 1 below illustrates our results.



Source(s): Author's own creation

Figure 1.
Result of the power analysis

Sampling procedure: The systematic sampling technique was used to arrive at the individual selection. Below were the procedures that were used:

(1) The sweet potato farmers were numbered from 1 to 2,160

(2) The sample size, n was decided to be 540.

(3) The interval, k = 4. That is $4 \times 540 = 2{,}160$ and $\frac{2{,}160}{540} = 4$

Every fourth participant was selected, and this continued until all 540 participants were sampled. The researchers then randomly assigned the participants to control and treatment groups with 270 participants each.

Instrument for data collection

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. The questionnaire had four segments that were numbered as A-D. Segment A collected demographic data while section B collected information on the annual income of the sweet potato farmers. Section C collected data on marketing skills with particular attention to sales promotion (3 items) advertising(4 items) and sales forecasting (5 times). Section D collected data on financial management skills with particular reference to budgeting (5 items), saving (4 items), controlling expenditure (3 items) and investment (4 items). The response format was a four-point Likert scale. Three experts in agricultural economics validated the questionnaire and their comments were useful in preparing a final version of the instrument. The researchers also determined the reliability of the instrument by conducting a pilot study of 40 sweet potato farmers that were not part of the final study, which yielded a Cronbach Alpha of 0.78, an indicating showing high reliability.

Procedure for the experiment

The sweet potato farmers received training that was aimed at improving their marketing and financial management skills. The training was divided into five modules and the modules were delivered in three weeks towards the sweet potato harvest season. Of the five modules, each was delivered three times and each session lasted for two hours to allow time for sufficient interaction. Four techniques were used in the oral communication intervention. The techniques are storytelling, questioning, explanation and instructional approach. Through the storytelling technique, the participants were told stories of people who have been able to improve their income as a result of their ability to market their products and

services as well as effectively manage finances. The questioning approach was used to ask the sweet potato farmers questions relating to ways of improving their income while the explanation technique was used to understand the current marketing strategies and financial management approaches of the sweet potato farmers. The instructional strategy provided instructional guides to the sweet potato farmers on how to improve their marketing and financial management skills. It is important to clarify here that the intervention was repeated at the beginning of each harvest season for the three farming seasons. This approach was based on the study of Gever *et al.* (2023) who found that training for farmers is more effective when it is delivered at intervals.

Data collection

The first phase of data collection was before the training which was called time 1. The second phase of data collection was after the training and this was called time 2. The last phase of data collection was a follow-up (which was called Time 3) assessment after three farming seasons.

Data analysis

The researchers analysed data for this study quantitatively. In doing so, percentages, mean and standard deviation were utilized. Also, the researchers tested the hypothesis for the study using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). The dependent variables were marketing skills and financial management while the independent variable was oral communication intervention. The covariates were gender and farm size.

Results

Among the 540 sweet potato farmers, 43 dropped from the study and only 493 completed the study. Among the 43 sweet potato farmers that dropped out, 21 were from the training group while 22 were from the no-training group. This means that the eventual participants for the training group were 249 while those for the no-training group were 248. The gender distribution of the sweet potato farmers revealed that the no-training group was 56% male and 44% female. The training group was 53% male and 47% female. Concerning their farm size, the no-training group had the following: 23% reported be 1–2 hectares, 51% reported 3–4 hectares and 26% reported 5 hectares and above. For the training group, it was as follows: 26% reported 1–2 hectares, 49% reported 3–4 hectares and 25% reported 5 hectares and above. It should be noted that production did not significantly change as it was 67 tonnes in 2019, 65 tonnes in 2020 and 66 tonnes in 2021 for the control group. For the intervention group, it was 64 tonnes in 2019, 67 tonnes for 2020 and 66 tonnes for 2021. The result of the hypothesis testing is presented below:

The researchers computed Table 1 to determine the impact of the oral communication intervention on the marketing skills of sweet potato farmers. The result of the study revealed that although before the training, sweet potato farmers did not significantly differ in their scores on marketing skills, they significantly differed after the training and during follow-up evaluation. This means that the training was effective in improving marketing skills among the participants, $F(1,331)$, 313.512, $p = 0.001$. Additional results showed no significant interactive effect of farm size on the impact of the training $F(1,331)$, 1.302, $p = 0.202$. But there was a significant interactive effect of gender $F(1,331)$, 27.193, $p = 0.001$ and the impact of training on improving marketing skills. The training assisted men to improve their marketing skills more than women but the degree of the difference was only 17% ($\eta_p^2 = 0.171$). Therefore, the first hypothesis that oral communication intervention will improve marketing skills was supported.

The result in Table 2 reveals the impact of the oral communication intervention on the financial management skills of sweet potato farmers. The result of the study revealed that

before the training, sweet potato farmers did not significantly differ in their scores on financial management skills, however, after the training, the oral communication group improved significantly on their financial management skills, unlike the no-training group, The training group sustained their improvement during follow-up analysis, $F(1,632)$, 4031.313, $p = 0.001$. Further results revealed a significant interactive effect of gender $F(1,632)$, 31.201, $p = 0.0.03$ and farm size, $F(1,632)$, 29.293, $p = 0.001$ and the impact of training on improving in financial management skills. The training assisted women to improve their financial management skills than women. Also, sweet potato farmers with farm sizes of 1–2 hectares improved their financial skills than those in with 3–4 and 5 hectares and above. Overall, the result of the study supported the hypothesis that oral communication intervention will lead to an improvement in business skills of sweet potato farmers.

The result of the study as shown in Figure 2 revealed the income level of sweet potato farmers before the training, after the training and follow-up after three farming seasons. The researchers found a sharp contrast in the income of sweet potato farmers between those that received the training and those that did not receive the training. In particular, there was a steady increase in the income of sweet potato farmers that received the training over time but those who did not receive the training reported inconsistency in their income over time. Overall, the ratio of the income between the training and no-training groups was 65% for training group and 35% for no-training group.

	Condition	Mean	SD	P = value
Time 1	Training	14.6	0.45	
	No training	15.2	0.56	
				0.65
Time 2	Training	30.1	0.43	
	No training	16.5	0.76	
				0.03
Time 3	Training	39.2	0.54	
	No training	14.7	0.54	
				0.01

Note(s): Minimum Mean = 12
Maximum mean 48
Source(s): Author's own creation

Table 1. ANCOVA results on the impact of oral communication on the marketing skills of sweet potato farmers

	Condition	Mean	SD	P = value
Time 1	Training	19.3	0.37	
	No training	18.5	0.89	
				0.72
Time 2	Training	41.2	0.23	
	No training	18.0	0.98	
				0.02
Time 3	Training	51.2	0.67	
	No training	20.7	0.54	
				0.01

Note(s): Minimum Mean = 16
Maximum mean 64
Source(s): Author's own creation

Table 2. ANCOVA results on the impact of oral communication on the financial management skills of sweet potato farmers

Figure 2.
Income level of sweet potato farmers at Times 1, 2 and 3

Source(s): Author's own creation

Discussion of findings

The goal of this study was to assess the impact of oral communication training in improving marketing and financial management skills of sweet potato farmers. The researchers tested two hypotheses and assigned participants to training and no-training groups. While the training group received oral training sessions for three farming seasons beginning in 2019, 2020 and 2021, the no-training group did not receive any intervention. It should be noted that the intervention took place shortly before harvest season which was between February to June.

The researchers found that before the training sessions, all the sweet potato farmers scored low on marketing skills like advertising, sales promotion and sales forecasting. Both groups also scored low on financial management skills like budgeting, saving, investment and controlling expenditure. Their annual income level was also low and both groups did not significantly differ. This result point to the fact that sweet potato farmers in Nigeria typically possess low marketing and financial management skills which is negatively impacting their income. This result has echoed that of Bose *et al.* (2020) whose study revealed that sweet potato farmers in Nigeria suffer from low marketing skills which limits them from making money from cultivating sweet potato. However, the current study has extended that of Khan and Khan (2021) by not only looking at marketing skills but also financial management skills. This additional information is important because poor financial management skills is a contributory factor to low socio-economic status (. Kirsten, 2018).

The current study also revealed that after the training and during follow-up evaluation, the participants in the training group reported a significant improvement in their marketing skills and financial management skills. There was also an improvement in their income level from $238 at baseline to $523 after the training and $782 after the follow-up evaluation. On the other hand, the no-training group reported a staggered fluctuation in their income of $241 at baseline, $371 during post-training evaluation and $214 at follow-up assessment. This result has extended the study of Gani *et al.* (2020) who only examined the marketing challenge of sweet potato farmers without focusing on ways of improving their marketing skills. The study has also extended the study of Hayden *et al.* (2022) that examined the centrality of financial management skills without extending it to how to improve financial management skills of sweet potato farmers.

Additionally, the current study has extended studies (Omoare *et al.*, 2015; Tewe *et al.*, 2003) that have highlighted the financial potential of sweet potato farming with little attention on highlighting how sweet potato farmers can improve their living condition through the cultivation of sweet potato. Although understanding the financial efficacy of sweet potato is important, it is equally essential to assist sweet potato farmers so that they will harness the benefit of sweet potato cultivation. Therefore, the current study has shown that oral communication could be an important vehicle for training sweet potato farmers so that they will acquire skills needed for them to effectively market their produce. This information has extended previous studies (Baccino *et al.*, 2010; Dunbar *et al.*, 2006) related to oral communication that did not focus on how oral communication can be used to train farmers so that they will be able to benefit from the output from their farms.

The result of this study has implication on the human capital theory by showing that oral communication could be an efficient strategy for the development of human capital, especially when rural farmers are involved. The result has also shown that when farmers are empowered through training, it will lead to an improvement in their marketing and financial management skills that will eventually result in an improvement in their income. Therefore, the theoretical assumption of human capital (Goldin, 2014) is supported in this study. This study, has however, offered fresh perspectives to the interpretation of the theory by showing that oral communication could be used as a platform for human capital development. This fresh perspective is an extension from previous studies (Obasi *et al.*, 2021; Ugwuanyi *et al.*, 2023) that have applied this theory to study human capital development.

Conclusion and recommendations

The conclusion of this study is that oral communication is an efficient training avenue to train sweet potato farmers to improve their marketing and financial management skills so that they are able to earn more from sweet potato cultivation. It is, therefore, concluded that an increase in marketing and financial management skills will contribute to an increase in the income of sweet potato farmers. This study has implications on the promotion of agribusinesses in less developed economies by showing that one of the ways of promoting effective agribusiness is the training on the acquisition of marketing and financial management skills. This information could be useful for formulating policies and developing programmes aimed at empowering farmers in developing economies and promoting agribusiness. Despite the contribution of this study, it has some limitation. The first limitation is that the study examined only one crop. There is a need to pay attention to farmers of other crops for better understanding. Another limitation of the study is that the researchers examined only oral communication. There is a need to compare more than one training to understand which one is more effective. Finally, the current study did not consider the moderating effect of other factors like the source of labour and expenses. The researchers make three broad recommendations. First, further studies should be conducted to cover the observed limitations of the current study. In the second instance, the researchers recommended that training on marketing and financial skills should take into account the gender of the participants because the result showed that men improve their marketing skills more while women improved their financial skills more. It is also suggested that the farm size of the participants should be a factor when developing training packages because this was found to have moderated the impact of the training.

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