Capacity building needs of entrepreneurial skills of yam farmaers in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the capacity building needs of entrepreneurial skills among yam entrepreneur farmers in Ekiti state, Nigeria. Data were collected on respondents' socio economic characteristic, task and skill gap of entrepreneurial activities. Data were analysed with frequency, percentage, mean and multiple regression analysis. Findings shows that respondents were fairly old (mean age=55years), literate (67.5%), small-scale (mean= 0.96 hectare farm size) and household size (mean=6persons). Respondents had low proficiency and needed to be trained for capacity building for sourcing and use of necessary farm tools/machinery (mean=1.85), operating farm machinery (mean=1.21), processing yam tubers into different products (mean=2.28), sourcing for fund to finance yam farming and processing activities (mean=1.75), value addition skills in processing yam tuber to different products (mean=2.41), packaging skills of yam produce and processed products (mean=2.66), keeping basic records of farm income and expenses(mean=2.44), planning, prioritising and organising yam farming tasks (mean=2.26), assessing and managing yam enterprise risks (mean=1.22), precautionary practices against yam enterprise related hazards (mean=2.34), identifying and cooperating with government bodies (mean=1.54), team working skills, and persuasive communication and negotiation skills (mean=2.36). The study concluded that yam entrepreneur farmers are had low proficiency in several yam entrepreneurial skills. It was therefore recommended that yam entrepreneur farmers in Ekiti State should be trained in the needed areas of yam entrepreneurial skills.

Keywords: cooperating/networking skills, cultivation skills, opportunity skills, management skills, marketing skills

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities, establish and run an enterprise successfully (Akanwa and Akpanabia, 2013). Worldwide, entrepreneurship is regarded as a panacea to unemployment, poverty and poor economic growth. Stevenson (2005) added that certainly the growth and development of a country's economy is possible through entrepreneurial activities and its education.

Agricultural entrepreneurship education and training of innovative opportunity skills is important factor for sustainable livelihood of farmers (FAO, 2012). Although the process of becoming more entrepreneurial can be a challenge for small-scale farmers, hence they will need help from extension workers. The role of agricultural extension agents according to Adekunle (2013) involves the dissemination of information; building capacity of farmers through the use of a variety of communication methods and

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help farmers make informed decisions. Christoplos (2010) posited that extension and rural advisory services (RAS) are crucial to putting farmers' needs at the centre of rural development, ensuring sustainable food security and poverty reduction.

It has been argued that extension organizations must understand that there is little future for farmers unless they become more entrepreneurial in the way they run their farms and they must increasingly produce for markets and for profits (FAO, 2012). Similarly Meert, *et al*. (2005) had stated that for livelihood of farmers to be sustained in the rural areas, farmers are increasingly required to become more market oriented, and to treat their 'farms as firms'. Onyebinama and Onyebinama (2010) recommended in a study that extension education should provide the basis for providing entrepreneurial training for farmers in Nigeria.

Yam (*Dioscorea spp*) is one of the principal tuber crops produced in large quantities in Nigeria. Yam is a major staple food appreciated for its taste and cultural roles (Amujoyegbe and Bamire, 2005). Southwestern part of Nigeria is one of the major yam producing areas (Philip *et al*. 2006). Boiled yam can be consumed alone, pounded into a thick paste (pounded yam) or processed into flour. According to Awoniyi and Omonona (2006), Ekiti state is a major contact centre for yam production and marketing in south western Nigeria. Oluwasusi and Tijani (2013) noted that yam is the foremost and highly revered staple food when pounded among the people of Ekiti.

There is scarcity of literature that provides information of areas where yam entrepreneur farmers in Ekiti state needs entrepreneurial training. This is followed with the increasing importance to empirical findings in agricultural entrepreneurship as a necessity to develop effective agricultural extension policy process that will translate to improved agricultural production enterprise and reduced poverty among farmers in the rural areas globally (Gibb, 2000). In addition, Bruton, *et al*. (2008) had previously stated that research on the development of entrepreneurial and organizational competency of farmers is scarce in developing countries. McElwee (2008) noted that the development of entrepreneurial competency in the agricultural sector means bringing the farmer from the "farmer as farmer" position to the "farmer as entrepreneur" level through an extension educational process. It would be a waste of resources and frustrating to the agricultural extension organizations to design and deliver training on topics and entrepreneurial skills where yam entrepreneur farmers are already able and proficient.

The general objective of the study was to assess the capacity building needs of innovative opportunity skills among yam farmer entrepreneurs in Ekiti state, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to examine the:

(i) Socio economic characteristics of yam entrepreneur farmer
(ii) Task analysis of yam entrepreneur farmers
(iii) Skill gap analysis of yam entrepreneurial skills of respondents
(iv) Determinants factors of the capacity building needs of respondents

Materials and Methods

Study Area

This study was conducted in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Ekiti State is situated entirely within the tropics. It is located between longitudes 40°51′ and 50°451′ East of the Greenwich meridian and latitudes 70°151′ and 80°51′ north of the Equator. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people of Ekiti. Agriculture provides income and employment for more than 75% of the population of Ekiti State. Some of Ekiti's agricultural produce are: cash crops such as cocoa, oil palm, kolanut, plantain, bananas, cashew, citrus and timber; arable /food crops such as rice, yam, cassava, maize and cowpea.

Sampling procedure

Two-stage random sampling procedure was used in the selection of respondents for the study. The first stage involved a random selection of 32 farming communities. The second stage involved a random selection of 20 yam farmers in each of the farming communities selected. A total of 640 respondents were sampled. Only 580 questionnaires were analysed, while others were rejected. The criterion for rejection of a questionnaire was based on its incompleteness.

Measurement of variables

To determine the capacity building needs of yam farmers in the study area, this study adopted the FAO (1992) model of conducting training need analysis. According to the model, training need analysis process can be divided into three distinct analytical phases: job analysis, task analysis, and knowledge/skill-gap analysis.

Components of the task and skill gap analyses were measured. Task analysis was measured as follows:

(a) Frequency of performance: A 5 point Likert scale where were used. The scales were measured as seldom, occasionally, weekly to monthly, daily to weekly and daily. Score of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were assigned respectively.

(b) Importance of entrepreneurial skills: A 4 point Likert scales were used. The scales were measured as not important, moderately important, important, and extremely important. Score of 0, 1, 2 and 3 were assigned respectively.

(c) Difficulty in handling entrepreneurial skills: A 5 point Likert scales were used. The scales were measured as easy, moderately difficult, very difficult and extremely difficult. Score of 1, 2, 3 and 4 were assigned respectively.

The mean scores of each corresponding skills were summed and the mean scores of performance frequency, importance and difficulty in handling entrepreneurial skills were analysed. Also, threshold score for different categories of skills were then calculated to decide capacity building needs of respondents on yam entrepreneurial activities. A particular task is decided to need capacity building of skills if the total mean value is equal or greater than the threshold value.

The skill gap was measured as follows:

Proficiency of yam farmer-entrepreneurs was rated on a Likert type scale of 1 to 5. Scales were

measured as showed below: cannot do at all, can do less than half of the task, can do more than half but less than total, can do total but cannot maintain time schedule, and can do within time schedule. Score of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were assigned respectively. Means scores were used to consider the level of proficiency as 1= (mean 1 - 0.4), 2= (mean 1.5 - 2.4), 3= (mean 2.5 - 3.4), 4= (mean 3.5 - 4.4), 5= (mean 4.5 - 5.0).

Decision rule were described as follows:

(1) Is Proficiency a problem? : Total number of numeral assigned to scales / number of scale (i.e 15/5) = **3**. Mean equal to 3.0 was therefore considered as benchmark. Mean scores below 3.0 were indicated "Yes" as area where proficiency is a problem.

(2) Can be solved by training? : Average of number of total scale used (i.e 5/2) = **2.5**. Scale 2.5 was considered as benchmark to decide if skills can be solved through training. Scale highlighted below 2.5 (i.e scale 1.0 to 2.0) were regarded "Yes" as skills that can be solved by training.

Results

Table 1. Socio-economic characteristics of respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean (std. Dev.)
Age (Years)			**55.0** (13.56)
20 – 40	90	15.5	
41 – 60	287	49.5	
61 – 80	181	31.2	
Educational Status			
No formal education	115	19.8	
Adult education	73	12.6	
Primary education	198	34.1	
Secondary education	169	29.1	
Tertiary education	25	4.3	
Household Size (Persons)			**5.96** (3.092)
1 (Singles)	59	10.2	
2 - 5	203	35.0	
7 - 10	278	47.9	
11 – 15	40	6.9	
Land Area Cultivated (Acres)			
0.1 – 1.0	158	27.2	**2.40** (1.389) = **0.96** Hectares
1.1 – 2.0	167	28.8	
2.1 – 3.0	106	18.3	
3.1 – 4.0	85	14.7	
4.1 – 5.0	52	9.0	
5.1 and above	12	2.1	

Source: Field survey, 2016

Table 2. Entrepreneurial capacity building needs of yam entrepreneur farmers

Yam Entrepreneurial Tasks	Mean of Frequency of Performance	Mean of importance	Mean of difficulty	Total Mean Score	Remark If capacity building is Needed
Yam cultivation skills					
Improved land preparation	2.23	2.60	1.74	6.57	Not needed
Selecting suitable fertile land for yam production	3.36	2.50	1.07	6.93	Not needed
Performing improved yam miniset technology	1.56	3.17	2.91	7.64	**Needed**
Mulching	2.79	2.51	1.03	6.33	Not needed
Sticking	2.99	2.38	1.02	6.39	Not needed
Sourcing (rent/purchase) use of necessary farm tools/machinery	2.13	2.43	3.15	7.71	**Needed**
Operating farm machinery	1.29	3.15	3.79	8.23	**Needed**
Dose and method of application of agro-chemicals and fertilizer.	1.45	1.78	1.93	5.16	Not needed
Recommended row to row and plant to plant spacing	3.23	2.08	1.64	6.95	Not needed
Operating knapsack sprayer	3.20	1.73	1.41	6.34	Not needed
Appropriate time of harvesting	3.12	1.58	1.02	5.72	Not needed
Processing yam tubers into different products and value addition	2.94	2.72	2.78	8.44	**Needed**
Methods of storing yam tubers and processed products	2.86	2.31	2.52	7.69	**Needed**
Threshold value				***7.0***	
Opportunity skills					
Identifying, investigating and evaluating opportunities	1.66	1.98	1.79	5.43	Not needed
Sourcing for fund to finance yam farming and processing activities	1.27	2.62	3.13	7.02	**Needed**
Value addition skills in processing yam tuber to different products	1.77	1.73	2.24	5.74	**Needed**
Packaging skills of yam produce and processed products	1.68	1.68	2.34	5.70	**Needed**
Market and customer orientation	2.31	1.87	1.25	5.43	Not needed
Threshold value				***5.70***	
Management skills					
Keeping basic records of farm income and expenses	1.53	2.31	2.35	6.19	**Needed**
Time management skills	1.58	1.92	1.78	5.28	Not needed
Managing/supervision skills of hired farm labours and their needs	2.05	1.42	1.87	5.34	Not needed
Planning, prioritising and organising yam enterprise tasks	2.61	2.92	2.74	8.27	**Needed**
Assessing and managing farm risk	1.73	1.86	3.78	7.37	**Needed**
Improving efficiency, cutting costs and increase productivity	1.25	1.46	2.31	5.02	Not needed
Problem solving skills	2.00	2.29	1.28	5.57	Not needed
Skills in decision making, control and negotiation	2.44	2.44	1.25	6.13	Not needed
Precautionary practices against crop enterprise related hazards	2.96	2.52	2.19	7.67	**Needed**
Skills for ensuring full security of yam enterprises	2.58	2.64	2.67	7.89	**Needed**
Threshold value				***6.50***	

Co-operation / networking skills					
Identifying and cooperating with other players such as;					
a. Agric. extension agents	3.20	3.06	1.86	8.12	**Needed**
b. Customers	2.94	2.87	2.12	7.93	**Needed**
c. farmers' association group	2.72	2.90	2.28	7.90	**Needed**
d. support NGOs	1.08	1.78	2.53	5.39	Not needed
e. support government bodies	1.05	1.48	3.60	6.13	**Needed**
Effective networking and communication with other players through electronic networking tools;					
a. Facebook	2.08	2.18	2.24	4.26	Not needed
b. Electronic mailing address	1.06	1.22	3.45	2.28	Not needed
c. Whatapp	1.81	1.87	2.69	3.68	Not needed
d. 2go	1.90	1.82	2.08	5.80	**Needed**
e. Voice call / SMS	3.08	2.35	1.25	6.68	**Needed**
Team working skills	1.44	2.38	2.62	6.44	**Needed**
Training and developing others	1.32	1.31	2.00	4.63	Not needed
Motivation and Leadership of farmers' group skills	2.17	2.02	2.13	6.32	**Needed**
Threshold value				***5.80***	
Customer/marketing skills					
Skills for transporting yams produce/products securely to the market	2.09	1.98	1.88	5.95	Not needed
Skills of identifying and understanding the demand of the customer	2.49	3.01	2.12	7.62	**Needed**
Skills of finding distribution channels	1.88	1.76	1.63	5.27	Not needed
Avoiding failing to meet customer's specification	1.99	1.93	1.82	5.74	Not needed
Persuasive communication and negotiation skills	3.05	3.07	2.47	8.59	**Needed**
Fix price of tubers / processed product	2.72	2.47	2.19	7.38	**Needed**
Becoming more effective in satisfying the need of buyers.	2.43	2.28	2.08	6.79	**Needed**
Threshold value				***6.80***	

Source: Field survey, 2016

Table 3. Proficiency level of skill in performing yam entrepreneurial tasks

Yam Entrepreneurial Tasks	Level of proficiency (Mean [level])	Is proficiency a problem?	Can problem be solved by training?
A. Yam cultivation task			
1. Performing improved yam miniset technology	2.19 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
2. Sourcing (rent/purchase) use of necessary farm tools/machinery	1.85 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
3. Operating farm machinery	1.21 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
4. Processing yam tubers into different products	2.28 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
5. Methods of storing yam tubers and processed products	2.63 [1 2 **(3)** 4 5]	Yes	[No]
B. Opportunity skills			
1. Sourcing for fund to finance yam farming and process sing activities	1.75 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
2. Value addition skills in processing yam tuber to different products	2.41 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]

3. Packaging skills of yam produce and processed products	2.66 [1 2 **(3)** 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
C. Management skills			
1. Keeping basic records of farm income and expenses	2.44 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
2. Planning, prioritising and organising yam farming tasks	2.26 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
3. Assessing and managing farm risk	1.22 [**(1)** 2 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
4. Precautionary practices against yam enterprise related hazards	2.34 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
5. Skills for ensuring full security of yam enterprises	2.59 [1 2 **(3)** 4 5]	Yes	[No]
D. Co-operation / networking skills			
1. Identifying and cooperating with other players such as;			
a. Agric. extension agents	3.14 [1 2 **(3)** 4 5]	Yes	[No]
b. Customers	2.88 [1 2 **(3)** 4 5]	Yes	[No]
c. farmers' cooperative group	2.72 [1 2 **(3)** 4 5]	Yes	[No]
d. support government bodies	1.54 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
2. Effective networking and communication with other players through electronic networking tools;			
a. 2go	2.92 [1 2 **(3)** 4 5]	Yes	[No]
b. Voice call / SMS	3.75 [1 2 3 **(4)** 5]	Yes	[No]
3. Team working skills	2.38 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
4. Motivation and Leadership of farmers' group skills	2.87 [1 2 **(3)** 4 5]	Yes	[No]
E. Customer/marketing skills			
1. Skills of identifying and understanding the demand of the customer	2.88 [1 2 **(3)** 4 5]	Yes	[No]
2. Persuasive communication and negotiation skills	2.36 [1 **(2)** 3 4 5]	Yes	[Yes]
3. Fix price of tubers / processed product	2.81 [1 2 **(3)** 4 5]	Yes	[No]
4. Becoming more effective in satisfying the need of buyers.	2.92 [1 2 **(3)** 4 5]	Yes	[No]

Source: Field survey, 2016

Table 4. Result of regression analysis to identify socioeconomic characteristics determinants of capacity building needs on yam entrepreneurial skills of respondents

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.269	.042		54.595	.000
Age	-.001***	.000	-.172	-3.665	.000
Educational status	.012**	.005	.124	2.583	.010
Household size	.001	.002	.030	.683	.495
Land area cultivated	-.001	.003	-.008	-.192	.848
Dependent Variable: Capacity building needs on yam entrepreneurial skills					
R = .364					
R Square = .133	**= 13.3%**				
Adjusted R Square = .116	**= 11.6%**				
Std. Error of the Estimate = .10443					
F-Statistics = 7.906, P < 0.01					
Sum of square residual = 6.194					

*** and ** denotes significance at 1%, and 5% respectively

Discussion

Personal characteristics of yam entrepreneur farmers

Table 1 shows that the mean age of respondents was 55years. This finding implies that yam farmers in the study area were relatively old but were expected to be economically active. Little above the average age found in this study were also found by Oluwasusi and Sangotegbe (2012) among yam farmers in Ekiti state. Ekong (2003) also ascertained that farming activities in Nigeria is dominated by older farmers because of the outmigration of youths to urban centres in search of white-collar jobs.

The result from in Table 1 shows that most of the respondents had formal education of primary education (34%), secondary education (29%) and tertiary education (4%). Formal education among most of the respondents is expected increase their interest in adopting innovative extension education and favourable mental attitude towards farming entrepreneurship. Abdullah and Samah (2013) similarly reports that educated farmers will prefer to experience the benefits of new technologies.

Table 1 shows that the mean household size of respondents was 6 persons. This finding implies that yam farmers in the study area have relatively large household size. This is expected to contribute positively to family labour in the study area. Onubuogu *et al*. (2014) opined that large household increases ease access to production variables such as labour which could enhance entrepreneurship development in agribusiness in the area. Onubuogu and Onyeneke (2012) also had asserted that large household size ensures availability of labour for farmers to address their labour challenges.

Task analysis of yam entrepreneur farmers

Task analysis of entrepreneurial skills for yam cultivation tasks was presented in Table 2. Tasks such as improved yam miniset technology, mulching, sourcing (rent/purchase) use of necessary farm tools/machinery, operating farm machinery, processing yam tubers into different products, and methods of storing yam tubers and processed products were identified as areas where training for capacity building were needed among respondents.

As shown in Table 2, the entrepreneurial skill to recognise yam business opportunities in sourcing for fund to finance yam farming and processing activities, value addition skills in processing yam tuber to different products, and packaging skills of yam produce and processed products were identified as areas where training for capacity building were needed among respondents.

The task analysis of entrepreneurial skills to manage yam enterprises were presented in Table 2. Record keeping, planning, prioritising and organising yam enterprise tasks, assessing and managing yam enterprise risks, precautionary practices against yam enterprise related hazards, and skills for ensuring full security of yam enterprises showed as areas where training for capacity building were needed among respondents. Similar findings was reported in a study by Okeme *et al*. (2014) who found that entrepreneurial skills making necessary arrangement in save guiding the farm and keeping of adequate records were required for economic success in cocoa production.

Table 2 further indicated capacity building was needed for entrepreneurial skills in cooperating and networking with colleagues and other stakeholders in the enterprise. Respondents needed to be trained to cooperate with agricultural extension agents, customers, farmers' association group and support government bodies. Also, networking skills through 2go, voice call/SMS, team working skills, and motiva-

tion and leadership of farmers' group skills were identified for training among respondents. McElwee, (2008) had emphases that the competency and the ability to use social networks, are important capacities upon which famers can build competitive advantages to help them succeed in free markets and eventually achieve sustainable development. Moreover in the process of developing such competency, farmers must become less dependent on government subsidies, respond to the growing demand for quality and respect the natural environment.

As presented in Table 2, entrepreneurial skills to relate with customers and marketing of yam produce such as identifying and understanding the demand of the customers, persuasive communication and negotiation skills, fixing price of tubers/processed products, and becoming more effective in satisfying the need of buyers were identified as areas where training for capacity building were needed among respondents.

Skill gap analysis of yam entrepreneurial skills of respondents

The skill-gap analysis determined how skilled or proficient individual yam farmers were based on entrepreneurial tasks, and how much individual yam farmers differ from desired performance. The importance of this analysis is to determine if gap/training needs identified in Table 2 can be decreased or removed through training or whether training is the most appropriate method (FAO, 1992).

Priority lists of the tasks were identified for capacity building according to the total score in the task analysis (Table 2). Then, the tasks that were identified on each task analysis worksheet were listed on the skill-gap analysis worksheet (FAO, 1992) to rate each task of current proficiency on a scale of 1 to 5. Identifying the tasks that appear to have low proficiency is required to identify the gap between their desired and the current situation. Subsequently, a review was done to ponder whether the gap can be decreased or removed through training or whether training is the most appropriate method.

As shown in table 3, the skill gap analysis after a review of tasks indicated the entrepreneurial tasks for capacity building needs. Cultivation skills that can be addressed through extension training were performing improved yam miniset technology, sourcing (rent/purchase) use of necessary farm tools/machinery, operating farm machinery and processing yam tubers into different products. Opportunity skills for sourcing for fund to finance yam farming and processing activities, value addition skills in processing yam tuber to different products, packaging skills of yam produce and processed products were identified that could be addressed through extension training. Management skills can be addressed through extension training were keeping basic records of farm income and expenses, planning, prioritising and organising yam farming tasks, assessing and managing yam enterprise risks and precautionary practices against yam enterprise related hazards. Only cooperation skill with government supporting bodies and networking skill for team working, persuasive communication and negotiation skills were identified. Training and improving competency of farmers in social networking were noted by (Mesquita and Lazzarini, 2008; Svetlicic, *et al*. 2007) as useful for agricultural entrepreneurs as they can help supplant weak institutions and attain the collective efficiency necessary to overcome infrastructure constraints in order to speed up market entries and eventually achieve sustainable development. This study agrees with the report of Katz (1991) and FAO (1992) who opined that, the question of entrepreneurial skills is related to the debate on whether entrepreneurship can be conceived as something trainable or not. For example, there are some skills which can be trained and some that cannot.

Determinant factors of the capacity building needs of respondents

The multiple regression model with four predictors was observed to produce low R^2 = .133 and adjusted R^2 = .116 values with F statistics =7.906, but the significance of the F values at P< 0.01 indicates the significance of the model and hence its ability to make valid predictions on the effect of the variables (Table 4). Abelson (1995) had similarly reported that the proportion of variance shared in dichotomous or continuous variable can be surprisingly small in social science based research (that is R<0.001), even when intuition would dictate a very large R^2. Moreover, even such a tiny R^2 can be meaningful, as long as the effect under investigation can make itself felt.

The result of the multiple regression analysis model in Table 4 showed that educational status of respondents (t= 2.583; p=0.010) was a positive determinant factor for respondents' need and willingness to participate in capacity building training of yam entrepreneurial skills. For educational status, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted. The implication is that highly educated farmer entrepreneurs will be willing and always see the need to be trained in yam capacity building skills. Similar importance of education had been cited in literatures. Butt *et al*. (2011) in a study argued that entrepreneur farmers who attained formal school education might develop and improve knowledge, wisdom and other desirable qualities of the respective individual. On the one hand, lesser educated entrepreneur farmers might struggle with the entrepreneurial environment. Also, Burger and Mahadea (2005) reported that that entrepreneurial culture and related skills are products of some attained levels of formal school education.

Furthermore, only age (t= -3.665; p=0.000) was inversely related to capacity building needs on yam entrepreneurial skills of respondents. This finding implies that increase in age will decrease the need and willingness of respondents for capacity building of yam entrepreneurial skills. This study further suggests that older farmers are likely not to accept entrepreneurial innovative skills for their yam enterprise activities. Similar finding was found that younger and better-trained farm owners show more diversified business activities, are more likely to have a positive attitude towards new market opportunities, a good appreciation of and sensitivity to customer needs, and are more willing to engage in new ventures (Carter, 2003)).

Conclusion

The study concluded that yam entrepreneur farmers in Ekiti State had low proficiency in several yam entrepreneurial skills and were needed to be trained in some cultivation skills, opportunity skills, management skills, co-operation/networking skills, and customer/marketing skills.

Recommendations

To build the capacity of yam entrepreneur farmers of Ekiti State for entrepreneurial skills, this study suggests agricultural extension policies formulation and implementing programme that will focus on (i) agri-entrepreneurship training in the specific areas where capacity building needs were identified in this

study, and (ii) encouraging old age and less educated yam-based entrepreneurs to participate in the agri-entrepreneurship capacity building training.

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