

**FARMERS' AND AGRICULTURAL ADVISERS'
PERCEPTIONS ON THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN
SWEET POTATO (*Ipomoea batatas L.*) PRODUCTION
IN TESO, UGANDA**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Poor husbandry, low use of improved inputs and limited access to technical advice are likely to be related to a farmer's education. Forty-six percent of Teso farmers are literate, but the literacy rate of men (66%) is higher than of women (34%). The study investigated the role of education in sweet potato production. Using an *ex post facto* research design, 24 out of 51 sub-counties were randomly selected based on district-county strata and used to determine the perceptions of sweet potato farmers and their agricultural advisers. Through interviews, observations and questionnaires, the survey covered 288 farmers and 33 agricultural advisers, while 329 community leaders and farmers were engaged in focus group discussions. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analysed qualitatively using open and axial coding; and quantitatively using means, frequencies, percentages, t-test, ANOVA, and multiple regression at a confidence level of 0.05 alpha. Six sweet potato productivity indicators (output per ha, output per person, output per shilling spent, income per ha, income per person, and income per shilling spent) and their levels were established. Indigenous technical knowledge was the chief source of the farmers' knowledge and skills used in growing sweet potatoes. Farmers with 1-4 years of primary schooling excelled in output per person, output per shilling and income per shilling. Farmers with 13-18 years of formal education and those who had contact with agricultural extension excelled in output per ha, income per ha and income per person. Primary schooling, secondary and college training facilitated in crop production and business management while agricultural extension and university facilitated better soil management. Farmers without formal education achieved lower productivity. Therefore, stakeholders should invest more in relevant farmers' education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
COPYRIGHT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
DECLARATION BY CANDIDATE.....	iv
APPROVAL BY SUPERVISORS.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	vii
ABSTRACT.....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	x
CHAPTER ONE	
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background Information.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Purpose of the Study.....	4
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	4
1.5 Hypotheses of the Study.....	5
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	6
1.7 Assumptions of the Study	6
1.8 Limitations of the Study.....	6
1.9 Definitions of Terms.....	7

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1 Components and Resources of Agricultural Productivity	10
2.2 Teso's Past and Present Performance in Agricultural Production.....	11
2.3 Factors Affecting Farm Productivity.....	20
2.4 The Contributions of Farmers' Education to Farm Productivity.....	22
2.5 Conceptual Framework.....	27
2.6 Summary.....	30

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	31
3.1 Research Design.....	31
3.2 Location of the Study.....	32
3.3 Population and Sampling.....	33
3.4 Instrumentation.....	38
3.5 Data Collection Procedures.....	43
3.6 Data Analysis.....	45

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	61
4.1 Sweet Potato Farmers in Teso.....	61
4.2 The Farmers' Support System in Teso.....	66
4.3 Human-Factor Issues among Farmers in Teso.....	104
4.4 Teso Farm Practices.....	113

4.5	Productivity of Sweet Potato Farms in Teso.....	122
4.6	Hypotheses Testing on the Six Sweet Potato Productivity Indicators.....	131
4.7	Summary.....	180
CHAPTER FIVE		
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		
		188
5.1	Summary of the Findings.....	188
5.2	Conclusions and Implications.....	192
5.3	Recommendations.....	196
REFERENCES.....		
		200
APPENDICES.....		
		215
Appendix A.	Schedule for Interviewing Farmers.....	215
Appendix B.	Questionnaire for Agricultural Advisers.....	224
Appendix C.	Farm Profile Essay Guidelines.....	233
Appendix D.	In Depth Interview Guide for Agricultural Advisers.....	243
Appendix E.	Focus Group Discussion Guide.....	253
Appendix F.	Characteristics of Sweet Potato Varieties Grown in Teso, Uganda...254	
Appendix G.	Graphs on the Levels of the Indicators by Formal Education Years..262	
Appendix H.	Letters of Permission to do Research in Uganda.....	269
Appendix I.	Map of Katakwi District.....	275
Appendix J.	Map of Kumi District.....	276
Appendix K.	Map of Soroti District.....	277
Appendix L.	Map of Pallisa District.....	278