

# INCREASING MARKET REWARDS FOR SUSTAINABILITY: A CASE OF PRIVATE NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COLLEGES IN GHANA

## ABSTRACT

The study sought to examine the interplay between market rewards and sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges in a competitive market environment. Over the last two decades, there has been a proliferation of Private Nursing and Midwifery Colleges in Ghana. These colleges are increasingly competing with their counterparts in the public sector that receive incentives from government. Therefore, increasing market rewards of private nursing colleges is imperative for sustainability of the colleges. The study adopted a descriptive survey design using quantitative approach. The design used survey questionnaire to gather data from 142 respondents. The study uncovered that equal employment opportunities for graduates, tax holidays, subventions or support from the government were the key market rewards that could lead to sustainability of the institutions. These rewards were found to have a significant relationship with the sustainability of the institutions. The study also discovered that, effective market rewards can lead to improvement in enrolment and attraction of local or external investors in management of private nursing and midwifery colleges to enable them compete with those in the public sector.

**Key words:** Market Rewards, Sustainability, Competitive Advantage, Private Nursing and Midwifery Colleges in Ghana.

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

The Africa region is considered to be one with the lowest ratio of health workers to population yet with highest burden of diseases, even though availability of skilled health workers has been shown to impact on health outcomes globally (WHO, 2016). Ghana is not an exception to this with less than 2.0(nurses, midwives and doctors) per 1000 of population against global target of 2.3 per 1000 population. The inability of Africa countries to produce the required number of quality healthcare professional has been attributed partly to over reliance on the public sector for health professional education (World Bank, 2013). The demand on the public sector to produce health workers to meet national requirements is therefore high. However, public sector

institutions are not able to meet this demand due to constraint public sector budgets (World Bank, 2013). The need for the private sector to support higher health professional education is therefore critical to scaling up health professional education.

The private sector's contribution to health workforce education has increased health workforce enrolment in countries like Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, Tanzania and India (WHO, 2006). The International Finance Corporation (IFC, 2007) indicates a huge investment prospects worth \$1.7 billion for the private sector in health workforce education in low income countries. However, these institutions are constantly faced with challenges such as limited legal and policy frameworks to enable them take advantage of these opportunities for investments (Preker et al. 2013). For example, even though private medical colleges in India represent 45 percent of the share of the market, there is the general perception that these colleges have limited faculties, insufficient infrastructure and higher tuition fees – therefore compromising quality of graduates (Preker, 2013).

Ghana's response to health workforce education challenge was invoked in a health sector policy which highlighted the importance of the private sector in health professional education (MOH, 2002). Therefore, the last two decades have observed the proliferation of Private Nursing and Midwifery Colleges in the country. These colleges are mostly linked to local communities and can be categorised into three based on the qualifications they offer; one category trains auxiliary nurses at the certificate level - called nursing assistants; the second category produces professional nurses and midwives at the diploma level while the third category produces the 4 year degree nurses or midwives. According to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (2019), there are over 41 private nursing and midwifery colleges representing 34.45% of nursing and midwifery colleges accredited to offer nursing and midwifery courses at the certificate, diploma and degree levels in the country. Since, 2015, the colleges have produced 14,000 qualified nurses and midwives into the health labour market (MOH, 2019), congealing their contribution to health professional education in Ghana and illustrates the importance of higher educational institutions to social economic development of countries (Waheed et al. 2011).

69 However, these colleges are increasingly competing with public nursing and midwifery colleges  
70 that receive incentives from the government. For instance, while graduates from the public  
71 sector are easily employed by the Government due to a contractual arrangement at their  
72 enrolment stage that mandates government to recruit them after graduation, those from private  
73 colleges have limited placement opportunities from the few private healthcare facilities in the  
74 country. Thus leaving many graduates from the private colleges unemployed in the labour  
75 market for so many years. Again, in 2017, when the government restored the nursing trainee  
76 allowance policy (MOH, 2017) it offered trainee nurses' pursuing diploma and certificate  
77 courses from public colleges stipends to support their education till graduation.

78  
79 As a result, private nursing and midwifery colleges are not attractive to prospective students and  
80 therefore most of the colleges are not able to compete in the existing market environments. This  
81 has led to the closure of some of the colleges in recent times. For, example, between 2004 and  
82 2017, 11 of the private nursing and midwifery colleges were closed down due to their inability to  
83 attract students and to breakeven financially (National Accreditation Board, 2019). This  
84 consequently defeat the rational for private sector intervention in health professional education in  
85 the country.

86  
87 This study examined the interplay between market rewards and sustainability practices of private  
88 nursing and midwifery colleges. Specifically, the study sought to identify the types of market  
89 rewards that could lead to sustainability of the institutions; examine the relationship between  
90 market rewards and sustainability of the institutions; and to explore the competitive advantages  
91 the institutions could gain from effective marketing rewards. The study is essential in that it will  
92 help management, staff and investors to gain insight into the various market rewards that could  
93 help improve the sustainability of private health institutions in the country.

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95 The study is also vital because it will help managers in private nursing and midwifery colleges to  
96 unveil suitable management practices that will boost their institutions' overall value. Further,  
97 findings of this study will help the government and other stakeholders to design targeted policies  
98 that will actively inspire the growth and sustainability of private health institutions in the  
99 country. Also the regulatory bodies of the institutions can use the study's findings to advance on

their framework of regulations. Finally, this study would add more empirical evidence to the existing literature on market rewards and the sustainability of private health training institutions in Ghana.

## **2.0 Market rewards and sustainability of higher educational institutions**

In an effort to improve health systems' performance in Ghana, it is crucial to pay proper attention to private health training institutions, including nursing and midwifery colleges - as this is likely to increase their contribution to the supply of health workers and national health goals as a whole. Beyond benefits to healthcare improvements, nursing and midwifery education contributes to poverty reduction, social integration and transmission of new knowledge in society. It could be argued that if sustainability of the private nursing colleges is to be achieved through market dynamics then the need for a comprehensive analysis of the market including market rewards is relevant to prevent misrepresentations.

As a result, information on issues such as policy, regulations, investments, tax holidays, ownership and partnerships will ensure efficiency in the operations of the market. Limited information about the market will probably lead to insufficient policy and investment choices with consequent issues affecting sustainability of private nursing colleges in the country. Therefore, increasing market rewards of private nursing and midwifery colleges is important for their sustainability in the market environment. Thus, private health institutions in the nation can only be part of a sustainable solution for improving access to good quality health care if they have the ability to stay in the market and produce the health professionals in both quality and quantity for healthcare delivery (Burger et al.2012; Berman et al. 2008; and Kozier et al. 2004).

According to Tanguy van Ypersele (2001) market rewards are incentives provided by government (directly or indirectly) to individuals or organizations to boost their performance without causing monopoly in the market environment. Braithwaite (2002) indicates that Organizations respond to market rewards because of competition in the market. In effect, Braithwaite is of the view that it is more appropriate to assume a competitor orientation than a renovator attitude in oligopolies markets. Tanguy van Ypersele (2001) opines that the major challenge with market rewards is the readiness of information to determine the level of rewards. Braithwaite (2002) examines rewards from regulatory point of view and suggests that reacting to

regulatory control through market rewards is likely to be greater than reacting to market discipline. In this context, Braithwaite postulates that rewards can be beneficial within specified conditions. These conditions include; transparency; measuring performance that should be rewarded; and a clear understanding of both regulatory and regulate power. In the absence of these conditions, Braithwaite argues that, it is difficult to anticipate much gains from market rewards as a result of outcomes from regulation since regulators are more interested in punishments than rewards.

In this paper, we define market rewards to include all forms of incentives provided by governments to private higher education institutions to improve performance, maintain sustainability while avoiding market dominance. The benefits of market rewards have been shown in the Agric Sector by Russi, et al (2016). They showed increase in enrolment of farmers to an agric scheme when they were given extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

Kurland (2011) has illustrated the increasing importance attached to sustainability of higher educational institutions. Therefore their sustainability is necessary not only to prevent the negative effect on socio economic systems but to produce prospects that would facilitate the development of societies (Waheed et.al., 2011). Models of sustainability for nursing and medical education in the private sector have been evident in a number of Africa countries including Senegal and Tanzania and these models have relied mainly on student fees (IFC, 2007).

In many OECD countries governments' rewards to the private sector are often enshrined in public-private-partnership (PPP) policies aimed at providing long term sustainability to these institutions. The rewards are often provided in two ways; first by creating 'externalities'- that is rewards beyond students' benefits; and second, through 'credit market imperfections' (World Bank, 2011). Therefore, the public sector in OECD have been seen to provide both direct and indirect market rewards to private sector educational institutions through their PPP policies. Some of the direct rewards cited in literature include subsidies, operating and research grants, salaries for staff, curriculum development, tax benefits, discounted or free lands, capacity improvements and soft loans while the indirect rewards include scholarships for both students

and faculty, framework for quality assurance as well as student loans and stipends (World Bank, 2011).

The World Bank (2011) has cited specific examples of market rewards for private education institutions in both develop and developing countries context. In New Zealand for example, the private sector education institutions represent about 15% of diploma and certificate admissions and these institutions have received support from the public sector in the form of subsidies, student loans and allowances. While, in Thailand, private sector education institutions receive market rewards such as; tax rebates; revolving funds for infrastructure, equipment and support for staff development.

### **3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study was a survey. Survey research design is defined by Graeling and Peters (2012) as a tool for data collection used to gather information from individuals or research participants. Surveys are mostly used in studies to solicit for self-report data from respondents and are directed mainly for valid and reliable information from study participants (Graeling & Peters, 2012). The survey research design was used because, it was capable of obtaining data from a large number of respondents; it was cost effective; a lot of questions could be asked without restrictions giving extensive flexibility in data analysis; and it was viewed as relatively free from several types of errors.

#### **3.2 Population and Sampling**

All management, staff and students in Royal Ann College of Health, Madonna Health Centre, Abuakwa Polyclinic, SDA Nursing and Midwifery Training College and Kumasi Nursing and Midwifery Training College formed the study's target population. Because of the large nature of the population, a sample of 142 was used for the study. This sample was selected through the simple random sampling technique. As indicated by Vazirani (2013), simple random sampling is a technique where a sample ( $n$ ) is selected randomly from a population ( $N$ ). According to the

author, the sample ( $n$ ) is selected from the population without replacement. This technique was used because, the researcher wanted to give each and every member of the population an equal chance of being selected. Thus, the researcher wanted to avoid biasness in the sampling process. In conducting the sampling, members in the population were assigned special numbers on papers. The papers were dropped into an empty container and were thoroughly mixed. Without looking into the container the researcher selected the sampling units one by one without replacement until the total sample ( $n=142$ ) was obtained. The sample consisted of 26 employees representing a sampling fraction of  $26/142$ , 8 management members representing a sampling fraction of  $8/142$  and 108 student nurses representing a sampling fraction of  $108/142$ . Table 1 presents a clear distribution of the sample.

**Table 1: Distribution of the Sample ( $n=142$ )**

Group	Males	Females	Total
Management Members	6	2	8
Employees	20	6	26
Student nurses	38	70	108
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>142</b>

(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

As indicated in Table 1, 6 respondents representing 75% of the management members were males and 2 respondents representing 25% of the management members were females. Also, 20 respondents representing 76.92% of the employees were males and 6 respondents representing 23.08% of the employees were females. Finally, 38 respondents representing 35.19% of the student nurses were males and 70 respondents representing 64.81% of the student nurses were females.

### 3.3 Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaire was the data gathering tool utilized for this research. Axelsson, Wynstra and Ruben (2004) viewed a questionnaire as a list of an investigative or study questions posed to respondents to extract a particular data. To Axelsson, Wynstra and Ruben (2004), the purposes of survey are: to gather the fitting information, make information comparable and agreeable to examine, minimize bias in defining and asking questions, and to make questions varied and interesting. Questionnaires were used because of their wider application, high response rate, limited time in administration and less cost. They were also used because; they aimed to elicit first-hand information from the respondents on the topic under study. The questionnaires

contained both closed and open ended questions and were divided into four sections (sections A to D). Thus, the questionnaires were structured according to the background of the respondents; types of market rewards that could lead to the sustainability of the institutions; the relationship between market rewards and the sustainability of the institutions; and the competitive advantages the institutions could gain from effective marketing rewards.

The open-ended questions in the questionnaires had dotted spaces provided for the respondents to give their various opinions whilst the closed-ended ones had various options provided for the respondents to choose from. The questionnaires were administered personally by the researcher. Each respondent was given three days to complete the questionnaires after which they were retrieved. The respondents were given three days each because the researcher wanted to allow them to answer the questionnaires at their own convenient time. In all, 142 questionnaires were administered to the respondents and they were all retrieved. Data gathered from the respondents through the questionnaires formed the primary source of data for the study. The researcher also obtained secondary data from books, articles, journals and past studies that related to the topic under study.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

Data obtained from the respondents was first edited. This was done with the aim of making data analysis and interpretation easier for the researcher. All the data were subjected to frequency counts to check and correct coding errors. A 5-point Likert scale was used to analyse the responses for the closed ended items where strongly agree-5, agree-4, uncertain-3, disagree-2 and strongly disagree-1 were the various weights. Frequency tables, graphs and percentages were finally used to analyse and interpret the results. These analysis and interpretation was conducted through the latest version of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The first part of the data analysis covered the background analysis of the respondents whilst the second and last part cover the analysis of data on the main research questions.



### **3.5 Data Validity and Reliability**

The survey was approved by a jury of six experienced supervisors and representatives and an expert in estimation and assessment. Substance validity was exact and decided. The choice of a jury and its composition was precise and concurs with the proposals of Wiseman (1999) and Johnson and Christenson (2000). The instrument was also subjected to a test of unwavering quality utilizing test-re-test strategy, and was judged to be dependable for authenticity in that it gave steady outcomes when utilized at different and diverse times.

### **3.6 Ethical Consideration**

The issue of ethics in conducting the research was highly adhered to. The researcher adhered to high moral and ethical values, thus ensuring protection and promotion of the rights of all individuals. The aspect of confidentiality was also given optimum attention. In this case, the identities of the respondents were not disclosed to other people alongside guaranteeing them security for any complications which may erupt thereafter.

## **4.0 EMPIRICAL RESULTS**

### **4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Demographic analysis includes the things that allow us to measure the dimensions and dynamics of populations (Preston, Heuveline & Guillot, 2000; and Schutt, 2006). Estimates from demographic analysis are often considered to be a reliable standard for judging the accuracy of a sample or a population's information gathered at a particular point in time (Siegal, 2002; and Wattenberg, 2004). The researcher wanted to find out the gender, age, educational background and the duration the respondents had been with the institutions, so as to know those who dominated the sample by way of the above demographic characteristics. Questionnaire items 1 to 4 were designed for that purpose and the responses were as follows;

Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. From the table, 64 respondents representing 45.07% of the sample were males and 78 respondents representing 54.93% of the sample were females. The results in Table 2 indicates that majority of the respondents were females. This tallies with the situation on the ground as majority of student nurses are females. On the age of the respondents, 89 respondents representing 62.68% were

within the age group of 20 to 29 years. Forty (40) respondents representing 28.17% were within the age group of 30 to 39 years. Eight (8) respondents representing 5.63% were within the age group of 40 to 49 years and 5 respondents representing 3.52% were 50 years and above. The results signposts that a greater portion of the respondents were within the active working age of the labour force of Ghana.

On the educational background of the respondents, 20 respondents representing 14.08% of the sample had secondary education. Seventy three (73) respondents representing 51.41% had HND/Dip as their level of education. Twenty six (26) respondents representing 18.31% had first degree as their qualification. Eighteen (18) respondents representing 12.68% had second degree as their qualification and 5 respondents representing 3.52% had other qualifications. The findings from Table 2 signifies that majority of the respondents had tertiary education.

**Table 2: Background Analysis of the Respondents**

<b>Demography</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b><u>Gender</u></b>		
Male	64	45.07
Female	78	54.93
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>
<b><u>Age</u></b>		
20-29	89	62.68
30-39	40	28.17
40-49	8	5.63
50>	5	3.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>
<b><u>Educational Level</u></b>		
Secondary	20	14.08
HND/Dip	73	51.41
1st Degree	26	18.31
2nd Degree	18	12.68
Other	5	3.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>
<b><u>Duration the respondents have been with the institutions</u></b>		
<1 year	26	18.31
1 year	8	5.63
2 years	51	35.92
3 years	28	19.72
4 years	15	10.56
> 5 years	14	9.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

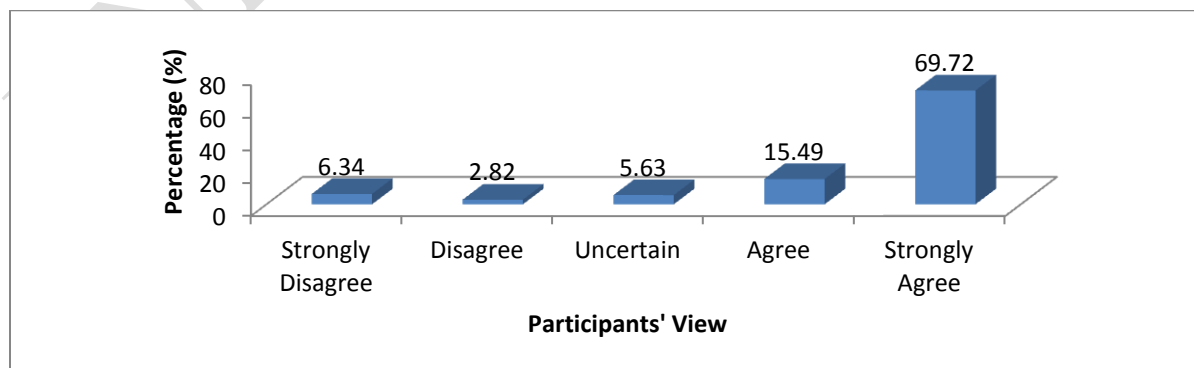
Finally on how long the respondents had been with the institutions, 26 respondents representing 18.31% had been with the institutions less than a year. Eight (8) respondents representing 5.63%

had been with the institutions for a year. Fifty one (51) respondents representing 35.92% had been with the institutions for two years. Twenty eight (28) respondents representing 19.72% had been with the institutions for three years. Fifteen (15) respondents representing 10.56% had been with the institutions for four years and 14 respondents representing 9.86% had been with the institutions for five years or more. The results indicates that majority of the respondents had been with the institutions for a year or more, with the respondents for two years dominating the sample.

#### 4.2 Types of Market Rewards that could lead to the Sustainability of Private Nursing and Midwifery Colleges.

This section presents the results on the types of market rewards that could lead to the sustainability of private Nursing and Midwifery Colleges. Specifically, the section sought to explore whether equal employment opportunities, subventions or support from the government, closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools and giving private nursing colleges tax exemptions were among the market rewards that could lead to the sustainability of the colleges. Questionnaire items 5 to 8 were designed for that purpose and the results were as follows;

**Figure 1: Equal Employment Opportunities for Accredited Private Health Colleges**



(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

From Figure 1, 9 respondents representing 6.34% strongly disagreed to the fact that equal employment opportunities was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing colleges in the Ashanti Region. Four (4) respondents representing 2.82% disagreed to the fact that equal employment opportunities was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing colleges in the Ashanti Region. Eight (8) respondents representing 5.63% were not certain as to whether equal employment opportunities was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. Twenty two (22) respondents representing 15.49% agreed to the fact that equal employment opportunities was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges and 99 respondents representing 69.72% strongly agreed to the fact that equal employment opportunities was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. The results from Figure 1 indicate that equal employment opportunities is a major market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges.

**Table 3: Subventions or Support from the Government**

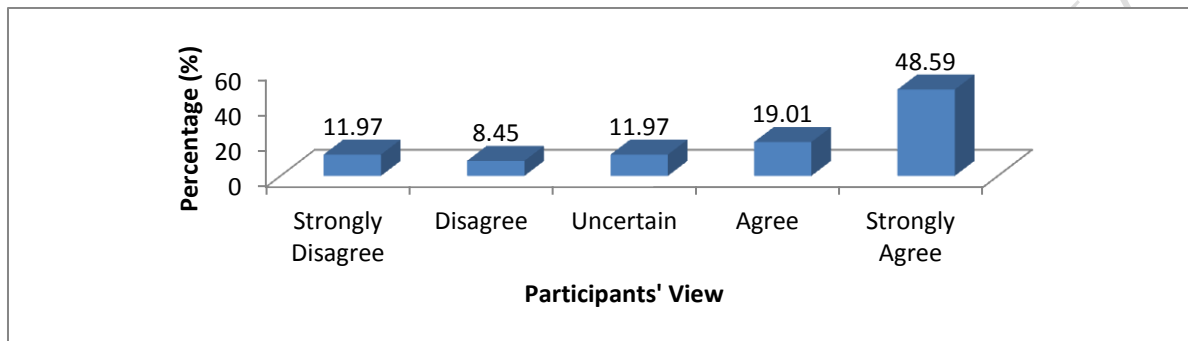
Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	13	9.15
Disagree	4	2.82
Uncertain	5	3.52
Agree	33	23.24
Strongly agree	87	61.27
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

As displayed in Table 3, 13 respondents representing 9.15% strongly disagreed to the fact that subventions or support from the government was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. Four (4) respondents representing 2.82% disagreed to the fact that subventions or support from the government was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. Five (5) respondents representing 3.52% were not certain as to whether subventions or support from the government was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. Thirty three (33) respondents representing 23.24% agreed to the fact that subventions or support from the government was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges and 87 respondents representing 61.27%

strongly agreed to the fact that subventions or support from the government was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. Findings from Table 3 show that subventions or support from the government is among the key market rewards that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges.

**Figure 2: Closing down or suspending all Unaccredited Private Schools in the Country**



(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

According to Figure 2, 17 respondents representing 11.97% strongly disagreed to the fact that closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. Twelve (12) respondents representing 8.45% disagreed to the fact that closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. Seventeen (17) respondents representing 11.97% were not certain as to whether closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. Twenty seven (27) respondents representing 19.01% agreed to the fact that closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges and 69 respondents representing 48.59% strongly agreed to the fact that closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. The results from Figure 2 signposts that closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools was not among the major market rewards that could lead to the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges.

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**Table 4: Giving Private Nursing Colleges Tax Exemption**

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	22	15.49
Disagree	18	12.68
Uncertain	27	19.01
Agree	36	25.35
Strongly agree	39	27.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

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388 As depicted in Table 4, 22 respondents representing 15.49% strongly disagreed to the fact that  
389 giving private nursing colleges tax exemption was a market reward that could lead to the  
390 sustainability of the institutions. Eighteen (18) respondents representing 12.68% disagreed to the  
391 fact that giving private nursing colleges tax exemption was a market reward that could lead to the  
392 sustainability of the institutions. Twenty seven (27) respondents representing 19.01% were not  
393 certain as to whether giving private nursing colleges tax exemption was a market reward that  
394 could lead to the sustainability of the institutions. Thirty six (36) respondents representing  
395 25.35% agreed to the fact that giving private nursing and midwifery colleges tax exemption was  
396 a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of the institutions and 39 respondents  
397 representing 27.46% strongly agreed to the fact that giving private nursing and midwifery  
398 colleges tax exemption was a market reward that could lead to the sustainability of the  
399 institutions. Results from Table 4 indicate that giving private nursing and midwifery colleges tax  
400 exemption was not among the key market rewards that could lead to the sustainability of the  
401 institutions.

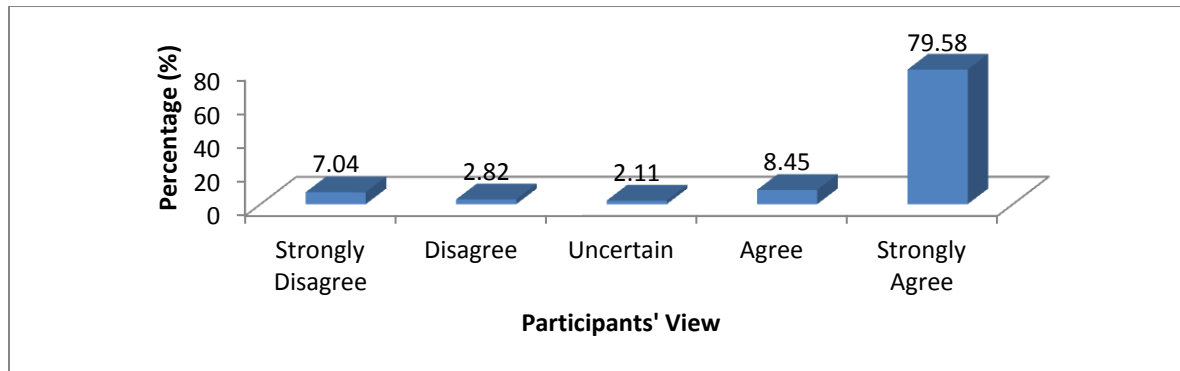
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#### 404 **4.3 Relationship between Market Rewards and the Sustainability of Private Nursing** 405 **Colleges.**

406 This section presents the results on the relationship between market rewards and the  
407 sustainability of Private Nursing and Midwifery Colleges. Specifically, the section sought to find  
408 out from the respondents whether equal employment opportunities, subventions or support from  
409 the government, closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools and giving private  
410 nursing and Midwifery colleges tax exemptions had a material association with the sustainability

of the colleges. Questionnaire items 10 to 13 were used for that purpose and the results were as follows;

**Figure 3: Equal employment opportunities has a significant relationship with institutions' sustainability**



(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

As shown in Figure 3, 10 respondents representing 7.04% strongly disagreed to the fact that equal employment opportunities had a significant relationship with the sustainability of nursing and midwifery colleges. Four (4) respondents representing 2.82% disagreed to the fact that equal employment opportunities had a significant relationship with the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. Three (3) respondents representing 2.11% were uncertain as to whether equal employment opportunities had a significant relationship with the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. Twelve (12) respondents representing 8.45% agreed to the fact that equal employment opportunities had a significant relationship with the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges and 113 respondents representing 79.58% strongly agreed to the fact that equal employment opportunities had a significant relationship with the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges. Results from the respondents indicate that equal employment opportunities had a vital association with the sustainability of private nursing and midwifery colleges.

**Table 5: Subventions or support from government has a significant association with the sustainability of the institutions**

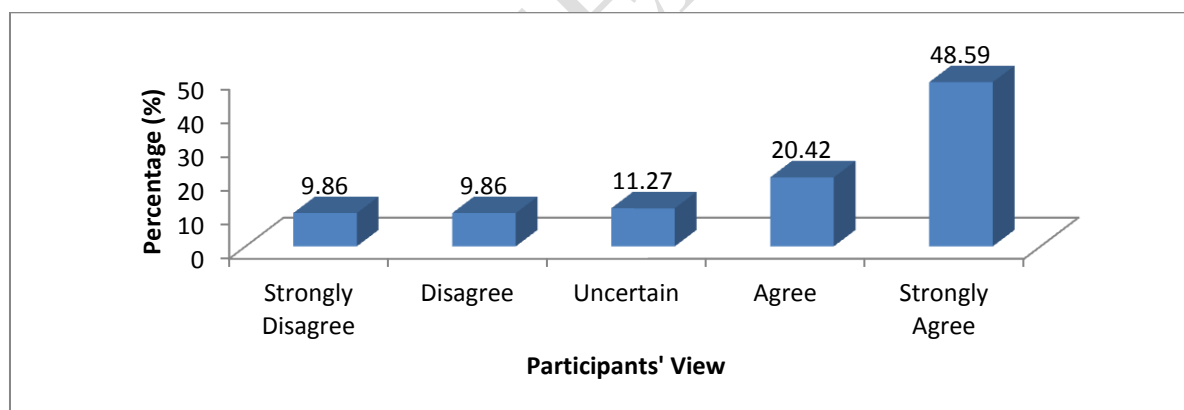
Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	8	5.63
Disagree	6	4.23
Uncertain	9	6.34
Agree	36	25.35
Strongly agree	83	58.45

Total	142	100
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(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

From Table 5, 8 respondents representing 5.63% strongly disagreed to the fact that subventions or support from government had a significant association with the sustainability of the institutions. Six (6) respondents representing 4.23% disagreed to the fact that subventions or support from government had a significant link with the sustainability of the institutions. Nine (9) respondents representing 6.34% were not certain as to whether subventions or support from government had a significant connection with the sustainability of the institutions. Thirty six (36) respondents representing 25.35% agreed to the fact that subventions or support from government had a significant affiliation with the sustainability of the institutions and 83 respondents representing 58.45% strongly agreed to the fact that subventions or support from government had a significant interplay with the sustainability of the institutions. The findings from Table 5 show that subventions or support from government had a material relationship with the sustainability of private nursing colleges in the Ashanti Region.

**Figure 4: Closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools has a significant link with the sustainability of the institutions**



(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

As displayed in Figure 4, 14 respondents representing 9.86% strongly disagreed to the fact that closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools had a significant relationship with the sustainability of the institutions. Another 14 respondents representing 9.86% disagreed to the fact that closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools had a significant affiliation with the sustainability of the institutions. Sixteen (16) respondents representing 11.27% were not certain as to whether closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools had a significant relationship with the sustainability of the institutions. Twenty nine (29) respondents



representing 20.42% agreed to the fact that closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools had a significant relationship with the sustainability of the institutions and 69 respondents representing 48.59% strongly agreed to the fact that closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools had a significant relationship with the sustainability of the institutions. The results from Figure 4 implies, closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools had a trivial association with the sustainability of the institutions.

**Table 6: Giving private nursing colleges tax exemption has a significant affiliation with the sustainability of the institutions**

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	26	18.31
Disagree	22	15.49
Uncertain	16	11.27
Agree	37	26.06
Strongly agree	41	28.87
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>

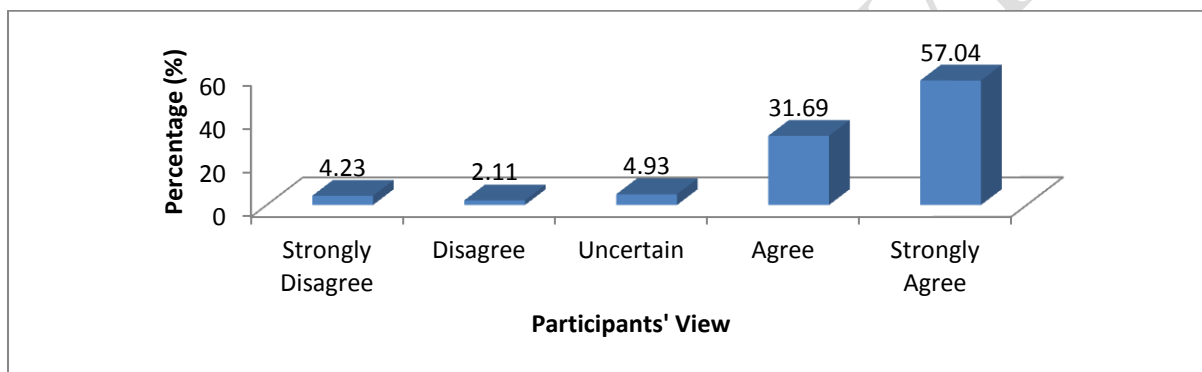
(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

As depicted in Table 6, 26 respondents representing 18.31% strongly disagreed to the fact that giving private nursing colleges tax exemption had a significant relationship with the sustainability of the institutions. Twenty two (22) respondents representing 15.49% disagreed to the fact that giving private nursing colleges tax exemption had a significant relationship with the sustainability of the institutions. Sixteen (16) respondents representing 11.27% were not certain as to whether giving private nursing and midwifery colleges tax exemption had a significant relationship with the sustainability of the institutions. Thirty seven (37) respondents representing 26.06% agreed to the fact that giving private nursing and midwifery colleges tax exemption had a significant relationship with the sustainability of the institutions and 41 respondents representing 28.87% strongly agreed to the fact that giving private nursing and midwifery colleges tax exemption had a significant relationship with the sustainability of the institutions. The results from Table 6 indicate that giving private nursing colleges tax exemption had an immaterial connection with the sustainability of the institutions.

#### 4.4 Competitive Advantages Private Nursing Colleges could Gain from Effective Marketing Rewards

This section presents the results on the competitive advantages private nursing and midwifery colleges could gain from effective marketing rewards. Specifically, the section sought to find out from the respondents whether improvement in enrolment, improvement in performance, improvement in revenue base and attraction of local and external investors were among the competitive advantages private nursing colleges could gain from effective marketing rewards. Questionnaire items 15 to 20 were used for that purpose and the results were as follows;

**Figure 5: Improvement in Enrolment**



(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

As portrayed in Figure 5, 6 respondents representing 4.23% strongly disagreed to the fact that improvement in enrolment was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Three (3) respondents representing 2.11% disagreed to the fact that improvement in enrolment was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Seven (7) respondents representing 4.93% were not certain as to whether enrolment improvement was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Forty five (45) respondents representing 31.69% agreed to the fact that improvement in enrolment was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards and 81 respondents representing 57.04% strongly agreed to the fact that enrolment improvement was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. The results from Figure 5 show that improvement in enrolment was a major competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards.

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**Table 7: Improvement in Performance**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Strongly disagree	7	4.93
Disagree	4	2.82
Uncertain	8	5.63
Agree	54	38.03
Strongly agree	69	48.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

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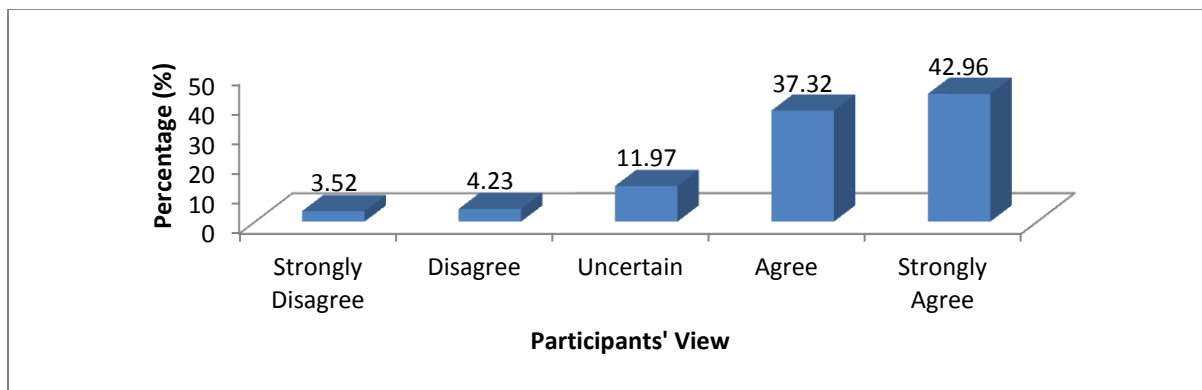
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From Table 7, 7 respondents representing 4.93% strongly disagreed to the fact that improvement in performance was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Four (4) respondents representing 2.82% disagreed to the fact that improvement in performance was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Eight (8) respondents representing 5.63% were not certain as to whether improvement in performance was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Fifty four (54) respondents representing 38.03% agreed to the fact that improvement in performance was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards and 69 respondents representing 48.59% strongly agreed to the fact that improvement in performance was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. The outcomes in Table 7 depict that performance improvement was not a major competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards.

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**Figure 6:Improvement in Revenue Base**

(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

As shown in Figure 6, 5 respondents representing 3.52% strongly disagreed to the fact that improvement in revenue base was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Six (6) respondents representing 4.23% disagreed to the fact that improvement in revenue base was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Seventeen (17) respondents representing 11.97% were not certain as to whether revenue improvement was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Fifty three (53) respondents representing 37.32% agreed to the fact that revenue improvement was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards and 61 respondents representing 42.96% strongly agreed to the fact that revenue improvement was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. The results from Figure 6 is an indication that improvement in revenue base was not a major competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards.

**Table 8: Enhancement of Enrolment**

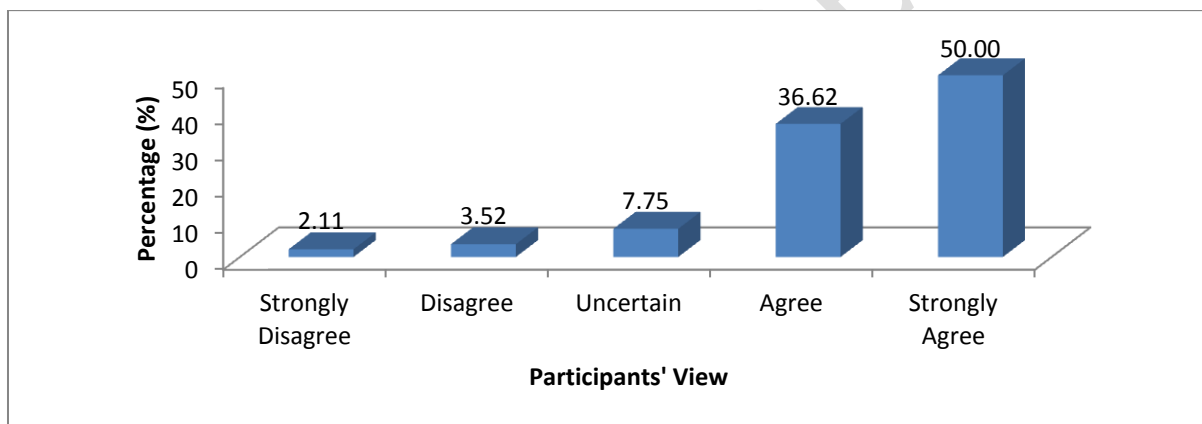
Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	7	4.93
Disagree	4	2.82
Uncertain	11	7.75
Agree	38	26.76
Strongly agree	82	57.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

From Table 8, 7 respondents representing 4.93% strongly disagreed to the fact that enrolment enhancement was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective

marketing rewards. Four (4) respondents representing 2.82% disagreed to the fact that enrolment enhancement was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Eleven (11) respondents representing 7.75% were not certain as to whether enrolment enhancement was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Thirty eight (38) respondents representing 26.76% agreed to the fact that enrolment enhancement was a competitive advantage private nursing and midwifery colleges gained from effective marketing rewards and 82 respondents representing 57.75% strongly agreed to the fact that enrolment enhancement was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. The results from Table 8 show that enrolment enhancement was a major competitive advantage private nursing and midwifery colleges gained from effective marketing rewards.

**Figure 7: Attraction of Local and External Investors**



(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

As portrayed in Figure 7, 3 respondents representing 2.11% strongly disagreed to the fact that the attraction of local and external investors was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Five (5) respondents representing 3.52% disagreed to the fact that the attraction of local and external investors was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Eleven (11) respondents representing 7.75% were not certain as to whether the attraction of local and external investors was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Fifty two (52) respondents representing 36.62% agreed to the fact that the attraction of local and external investors was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards and 71 respondents representing 50% strongly agreed to the fact that the attraction of local and external investors was a competitive advantage private nursing and

midwifery colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. The results from Figure 7 implies, the attraction of local and external investors was one of the major competitive advantages private nursing and midwifery colleges gained from effective marketing rewards.

**Table 9: Improvement in Feasibility**

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	4	2.82
Disagree	6	4.23
Uncertain	13	9.15
Agree	56	39.44
Strongly agree	63	44.37
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

According to Table 9, 4 respondents representing 2.82% strongly disagreed to the fact that improvement in feasibility was a competitive advantage private nursing and midwifery colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Six (6) respondents representing 4.23% disagreed to the fact that improvement in feasibility was a competitive advantage private nursing and midwifery colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Thirteen (13) respondents representing 9.15% were not certain as to whether the improvement in feasibility was a competitive advantage private nursing and midwifery colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Fifty six (56) respondents representing 39.44% agreed to the fact that improvement in feasibility was a competitive advantage private nursing and midwifery colleges gained from effective marketing rewards and 63 respondents representing 44.37% strongly agreed to the fact that improvement in feasibility was a competitive advantage private nursing colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. The results from Table 9 indicate that feasibility improvement was not among the major competitive advantages private nursing and midwifery colleges gained from effective marketing rewards.

## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This study sought to examine the nexus between marketing rewards and the sustainability of Private Nursing and Midwifery Colleges. Specifically, the study sought to identify the types of market rewards that could lead to the sustainability of the institutions; examine the relationship between market rewards and the sustainability of the institutions; and to explore the competitive advantages the institutions could gain from effective marketing rewards. The study was a survey

in which questionnaires were administered to 142 respondents. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 was employed for the study's data analysis and the results were presented in the form of frequency tables, graphs and percentages. On the types of market rewards that could lead to the sustainability of the institutions, the study found out that equal employment opportunities and subventions or support from the government were the key market rewards that could lead to the sustainability of the institutions. However, closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools and giving private nursing and midwifery colleges tax exemptions were not among the key market rewards that could lead to the sustainability of the institutions.

On the relationship between market rewards and the sustainability of Private Nursing and Midwifery Colleges, it was discovered that equal employment opportunities and subventions or support from the government had a material relationship with the sustainability of the institutions. However, closing down or suspending all unaccredited private schools and giving private nursing and midwifery colleges tax exemptions had immaterial links with the sustainability of the institutions. On the competitive advantages private nursing and midwifery colleges could gain from effective marketing rewards, it was uncovered that improvement in enrolment, the attraction of local and external investors and the enhancement of enrolment were the major competitive advantages private nursing and midwifery colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. However, performance improvement, improvement in revenue base and feasibility improvement were not among the major competitive advantages private nursing and midwifery colleges gained from effective marketing rewards. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made;

1. Equal employment opportunities for all accredited private nursing and midwifery colleges.
2. All accredited private health training institutions should be given incentives in the forms of learning logistics, subventions and tax holidays among others.
3. Since graduates from private health institutions also contribute to the welfare and the development of the state, authorities must ensure that there is equal opportunities as to enrolment policies and procedures.

4. To ensure fairness, public health training institutions must be made to go through the same accreditation policies and requirements as the accredited private health training institutions.
5. There should be one centralised admission policy for all accredited public and private institutions in the nation.
6. Private health institutions that meet all accreditation criteria should be made autonomous and should not be affiliated to public institutions in the nation.
7. Finally, graduates from private health institutions should be given equal opportunities to hold managerial positions in the health system just like their colleagues from the government institutions.

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