

## ENHANCING A SUSTAINABLE KNOWLEDGE BASED-ECONOMY THROUGH PRIVATE SECTOR LED-DEVELOPMENT: “A Case Study of Private Higher Learning Institutions in Rwanda”.

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### Abstract

The government of Rwanda has a vision to transform the nation to a middle income country by the year 2020. Within this vision, private sector-led development is one of the major pillars envisaged to promote gravitation towards national goals. It is hoped that through private sector led development, sustainable economic growth and development will be realized in the long-run, as a higher stock of skilled human capital will trigger more productivity in the economy hence positively impacting the national income of Rwanda. Entrepreneurship has been identified as one of the most important strategies for enhancing job creation thus creating sustainable economic growth and development especially for the youth and the graduating students from different universities/institutions. The main objective of this research is to assess the contribution of private higher learning institutions in entrepreneurship development and job creation in Rwanda. The study considered mainly primary data and both qualitative and quantitative information from different individuals and institutions where graduates from private higher learning institutions are currently working. Different sampling techniques were employed to collect the relevant data; and these included: purposive sampling and snowball sampling. For comparative analysis, some graduates currently not working were also sampled to study the impeding factors. Data were analyzed using SPSS, and both statistical and non-statistical methods of analysis were employed.

Findings showed that private higher learning institutions have not only contributed to entrepreneurship development and job creation but also enhanced the knowledge-based economy in Rwanda. Private Higher Learning Institutions in Rwanda have enhanced the performance of entrepreneurs up to 67.3% from 2008 to 2012. This figure is an average of the responses from the informants investigated from the surveyed institutions and individuals.

**Keywords:** Knowledge based-economy, Private Sector, Private Higher Learning Institution.

## 1 Introduction

Knowledge has been widely recognised by economists as the most important factor of production in a “new economy”. The production and utilisation of knowledge is therefore essential for development.

Knowledge, as embodied in human beings has always been central to economic development. Indeed, knowledge societies are based on understanding that knowledge forms a major component of any human development endeavour. A knowledge society creates, shares, and uses knowledge for the prosperity and well-being of its people (OECD, 2000; UNESCO, 2005; Schackstr, 2011).

In light of building a knowledge society, Rwanda has embarked on an ambitious plan to use knowledge as a base for economic development. In the past decades, Rwandan economy has been agrarian and mostly depending on agriculture as the engine for economic growth. More than 80% of the population was engaged in farming (MINAGRI, 2004). However, the level of production is still low thus requiring further transformation and development. It is in this regard that the government of Rwanda has set a vision to transform the nation *into a knowledge based middle income country* by the year 2020 (MINECOFIN, 2000). Within this vision, the Government has identified six priority pillars and three cross cutting areas that will promote gravitation towards national goals. This study has focused on two of the six priority pillars, namely (1) **human resource**

**development and a knowledge-based economy, and (2) private sector-led development.**

In order to implement the above two pillars, the Government has encouraged private entrepreneurs in various domains through a favorable business climate and investor - friendly policies. Besides, different institutions and programs have been initiated, including: Rwanda Development Board (RDB): to fast track economic development by enabling private sector growth; Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA): to highlight the importance of Cooperatives in the National economic development; Private Sector Federation (PSF): to promote and represent the interests of the business community; Business Development Fund (BDF): to promote SMEs development through the provision of financial services and enhancing the lending mechanisms of financial institutions; and HANGA UMURIMO program: to reinforce and support small and medium enterprises, and also addressing the challenges of lack of jobs especially for young graduates.

The above institutions and programs are working in a coordinated framework towards initiating and enhancing a sustainable knowledge based economy in Rwanda by 2020.

The term “*knowledge-based economy*” results from a full recognition of the role of knowledge and technology in economic growth. Knowledge based

economy represents a new phase in the civilizations' development, which promises a new and better way of living. This economy is based on information and knowledge from all fields of economic activities and human existence and has an important economic and social impact (Tocan and Madilina, 2011).

World Bank Group (2012) has also asserted that building a knowledge based economy requires a vigorous and well-regulated private sector as one of the key drivers for economic growth and development in any country. The Private Sector Development (PSD), is intimately related to innovation, job creation, technology adoption, and productivity improvements. Private Sector Development (PSD) is a strategy for promoting economic growth and reducing poverty in developing countries by building private enterprises, membership organizations to represent them, and competitive markets that are stronger and more inclusive (Bennett, 2008).

The development of the private sector in Rwanda is not only essential for economic growth but also to ensure the emergence of a productive middle class of entrepreneurs as part of a service and knowledge-based economy (UNIDO, 2008; MINICOM, 2011; CIDA, 2013; World Bank Group, 2013).

The emergence of a viable private sector in Rwanda will serve as a conduit for local and foreign direct investment in the country and will also take over as the principle growth engine (MINECOFIN, 2000;

Mole and Bramley, 2006; MINEDUC, 2008; World Bank, 2010; Mole et al., 2011). Besides, one of the strategic goals for developing countries is to become the most competitive knowledge-based economy, and sustainable development remains one of the key factors of such a knowledge based economy (Tocan, 2011).

As noted by Brundtland Commission (1987), sustainable development refers to the "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs". Many researchers and institutions have also established a strong relationship between knowledge based-economy and sustainable development on one hand (Brandt, 1982; United Nations, 2003; Rosa, 2008; World Bank, 2009) and between knowledge based-economy and private sector-led development on the other hand (Abromowitz, 1989; Romer, 1994; Baldwin et al., 1995; Bartel, 1995; Industrial Research Institute (IRI), 1995; Lauritzen, 1996; OECD, 1996). Manning et al. (2011) also highlighted that the three concepts, namely knowledge-based economy, sustainable development and the private sector-led development are interconnected and thus lead to job creation. Additionally, the positive relationship between education and business creation has also been recognized by national and international literature (Robinson and Sexton, 1994; Charnay and Libecap, 2000; Luthje and Franck, 2002; Kuratko, 2003; Sawyerr, 2004; Niyonkuru, 2005; Bloom et al.,

2006; MINEDUC, 2008).

It is therefore essential to integrate these concepts in Rwanda's vision 2020 as a strategic goal that will facilitate a dynamic, sustainable and accelerated development.

For the private higher learning institutions (PHLIs) to contribute in the Rwanda's Vision 2020, various undergraduate and some graduate courses/disciplines are delivered in these institutions and these are combined in the following large components: *arts, humanities and social sciences, applied and natural sciences, agricultural sciences, health sciences, law, and business studies*. Private higher learning institutions do not only contribute to human resource development and enhancement of the knowledge-based economy but also in gender promotion through female education in Rwanda (Butera and Taremwa, 2010). Many graduates with majority females have acquired education through private higher learning institutions. As noted by Honourable Harebamungu (2011), the Rwandan State Minister in charge of Primary and Secondary Education, *"Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) have a challenge of transforming themselves and thus positioning themselves to play a crucial role in providing a graduate labour force with knowledge and skills needed to sustain the socio-economic development of Rwanda"*.

The Minister further stressed that *"The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) considers knowledge as the prime mover of development. How to provide quality*

*education in large numbers at affordable cost is the primary concern in Rwanda. Quality and vision should be the mission of every higher education institution"*.

The main research objective is to assess the contribution of private higher learning institutions to entrepreneurship development and job creation in Rwanda. The specific objectives are:

- 1) To identify entrepreneurship courses provided in Private higher learning institutions;
- 2) To find out the factors which determine entrepreneurship potential among the graduates from private higher learning institutions;
- 3) To assess the performance of graduates from private higher learning institutions in their working environments;
- 4) To examine the extent to which private higher learning institutions have contributed in entrepreneurship development and job creation.

The research hypotheses are the following:

- i. There is a relationship between entrepreneurship development and the quality of education in private higher learning institutions;
- ii. There is a significant difference in the performance of graduates from public and private higher learning institutions in their working environments;
- iii. There is a significant impact of the knowledge acquired by graduates from private higher

learning to entrepreneurship and job creation.

## **2. Methods**

This section focuses on research techniques and procedures adopted and used in the study with the aim of achieving the research objectives.

Given the nature of this specific research, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Mainly primary data was gathered from individuals, different employing institutions and also from private higher learning institutions where graduates have studied. Ten private higher learning institutions were investigated including: CUR, ICK, INATEK, INES, INILAK, IPB, ISPG, PIASS, RTUC and ULK.

### **Sampling frame used**

Ten (10) private higher learning in ARIPES, and four (4) districts (Gasabo, Huye, Ngoma, Musanze) were selected. In each academic institution, key informants included the Director of Quality, one Dean of Faculty, Registrar and any two lecturers. A maximum of fifty respondents were investigated.

At the district level, questionnaires were administered to the human resources manager, two independent entrepreneurs identified by the district authorities, two working graduates (one from private and another from public) and also from two graduates who are still jobless. A total of 28 respondents were selected at the district level. An overall sample of seventy eight (78) persons was taken. Key sampling techniques used in data

collection included: purposive sampling, and snowball sampling. Both purposive and snowball sampling techniques were employed to capture information from key informants (employing institutions) who are well informed about the graduates' performance. These techniques were used to identify the graduates both working and non-working groups. The response rate was approximately 96%.

Graduates were consulted from their current working environments and the focus for investigation was mainly on the factors and determinants of their performance at their current jobs. Graduates were asked to describe their education background, institution attended (public/private) and the number of years in service.

Snowball sampling was used to identify non-employed graduates by the working/employed graduates. Working graduates were asked to identify at least two former colleagues/classmates who are not working or not currently employed. The non-employed graduates were also consulted in order to determine the underlying factors and impediments after their graduation. As described by Heckathorn (2002), snowball sampling is used when you do not have access to sufficient people with the characteristics you are seeking to investigate. This method allows identified individuals to refer you to other people who fit your study requirements and then follow up with these new people. This method is repeated until you obtain enough people.

### Qualitative data analysis

As noted by Gibbs et al. (2012), qualitative data usually involve people and their activities, signs, symbols, artefacts and other objects they imbue with meaning. The most common forms of qualitative data are what people have said or done. Qualitative information was collected from both non-working graduates, working graduates and employees in order to assess their attitudes, perceptions and behaviours after graduation. Qualitative data was analysed using non-parametric tests, particularly Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ).

### Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative data analysis is the process of presenting and interpreting numerical data. It often contains descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics include measures of central tendency (averages - mean, median and mode) and measures of variability about the average (range and standard deviation). Inferential statistics are the outcomes of statistical tests, helping deductions to be made from the data collected, to test hypotheses set and relating findings to the sample or population (UWE, 2013).

### Questionnaires and interviews

In order to capture the necessary information, researchers used both questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires and interviews were organised in a structured, semi-structured and unstructured way. To obtain qualitative information the researchers used open ended questions while quantitative information was obtained by closed ended questions.

Different questionnaires were designed according to the type of information to be obtained. Four types of the questionnaires were used on private higher learning institutions, districts and independent entrepreneurs/employers, working graduates/ and non-working graduates.

### Data processing and presentation

Data will be processed using Excel and SPSS software and results will be presented in form of tables, figures/graphs for better interpretation.

## 3. Results and Discussion

This section focuses on the major findings and interpretation of results.

### 3.1. Number of graduates in five years

The figure below presents the number and evolution of graduates from 2008 to 2012.

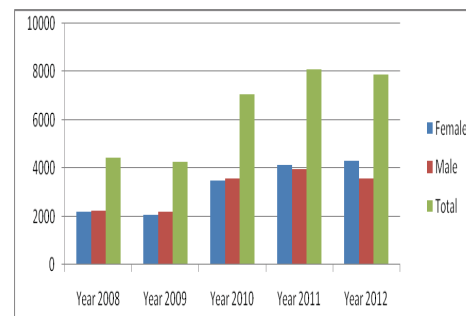


Figure1. Number of graduates in five last years

As indicated in figure one above, PHLIs have trained both female and male students in almost equal numbers. The

figure further indicates that the student numbers were increasing very positively thus confirming that PHLIs do contribute to education of many people. There has been an important increase of graduates in private higher learning institutions during the five last years (from 4443 in 2008 to 7886 graduates in 2013).

### 3.2. Programs offered in PHLIs

The following table represents the 10 private higher learning institutions (ARIPES members) and the number of Faculties and Programs delivered in each institution.

**Table 1: Institutions, Faculties and Programs offered**

Names	Number & Name of Faculties	Categories of programs Delivered
<b>CUR</b>	<b>6 Faculties</b>	
	Catechesis and Religions Studies	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
	Commerce	Business Studies
	Education	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
		Applied and Natural Sciences
	Public Health and Human institution	Health Sciences
	Science and Technology	Applied and Natural Sciences
	Social work	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
<b>ICK</b>	<b>3 Faculties</b>	
	Social economic Sciences & Management	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
	Journalism & Communication Studies	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
	Sciences of Development	Business Studies
<b>INATEK</b>	<b>2 Faculties</b>	
	Education	Health Sciences
		Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
		Business Studies
		Applied and Natural Sciences
	Rural Development	Agricultural Sciences
<b>INES</b>	<b>4 Faculties</b>	
	Fundamental Applied Sciences	Applied and Natural Sciences
		Agricultural Sciences
	Economics, Social sciences and Management	Business Studies
		Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
	Law	Law
	Languages and Applied Linguistics	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
<b>INILAK</b>	<b>3 Faculties</b>	
	Economic Sciences and	Business studies

	Management	
	Law	Law
	Environmental Studies	Environmental and disaster management
		Rural development
<b>IPB</b>	<b>2 Faculties</b>	
	Social Sciences Management & Development studies	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
		Agricultural Sciences
		Business Studies
	Education	Applied and Natural Sciences
		Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
<b>ISPG</b>	<b>4 Faculties</b>	
	Nursing Sciences	Health Sciences
	Biomedical Sciences	Health Sciences
	Computer Sciences	Applied and Natural Sciences
	Computer Sciences Engineering	Applied and Natural Sciences
<b>PIASS</b>	<b>3 Faculties</b>	
	Development Studies	Agricultural Sciences
		Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
	Theology and Religion studies	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
	Education	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
		Applied and Natural Sciences
		Business Studies
<b>RTUC</b>	<b>3 Faculties</b>	
	Hotel and Restaurant Management	Business Studies
	Travel and tourism Management	Business Studies
	Business information Technology	Business Studies
<b>ULK</b>	<b>4 Faculties</b>	
	Economics & Business studies	Business studies
	Law	Law
	Science & technology	Applied and Natural Sciences
	Social Sciences	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Table 1 above indicates the 10 member institutions in ARIPES, and the respective Faculties and Programs offered in each institution. The table further indicates that knowledge and skills provided cover a range of domains including: arts, humanities and social science, applied and natural sciences, agricultural sciences, health sciences, law, and business studies. The program

of business studies includes generally matters related to entrepreneurship development and job creation. All ARIPES member institutions offer business studies except ISGP which does not have a Faculty or Department teaching business studies.



**3.4. Necessary attributes for an entrepreneur**

The table 2 below depicts how different respondents rank the attributes for becoming an effective entrepreneur.

Three clusters of respondents were considered, namely (1) PHLIs, (2) district and independent entrepreneurs and (3) graduates (working and non-working).

**Table 2. Attributes as perceived by different respondents**

Attributes		Percentage of respondents		
		PHLIs	DIE*	EG & NEG**
1	Vision	78.7	90.9	81.3
2	Creativity and innovativeness	72.3	81.2	87.5
3	Passion for business	63.8	100.0	75.0
4	Need for achievement	68.1	100.0	75.1
5	Optimistic disposition	59.6	90.9	75.0
6	Moderate risk taking ability	44.4	63.6	56.3
7	Time management	63.8	81.9	87.6
8	Others (strong work ethic, self-confidence, etc.)	55.3	-	68.8

\*DIE: District and Independent entrepreneurs; \*\* EG: employed graduates, NEG: Non employed graduates

As shown in Table two above, respondents from the three categories assert that all the attributes for an entrepreneur are delivered at more than 50%, except “moderate risk taking ability” which is considered to be delivered at 44.4%. This implies that PHLIs provide to the students all the attributes needed to be an

entrepreneur, as all are delivered at more than 50%, and “moderate risk taking ability” at a low level.

**3.5. Proposed area for improvement**

The following table presents the suggestions for improvement as required by respondents from two categories including district and independent entrepreneurs, and employed and non employed graduates.

**Table 3. Required improvement**

Area for improvement		Percentage	
		DIE	EG & NEG
1	Visioning	87.2	100
2	Communication	93.9	100

3	Networking and collaboration with the regulatory agencies such as RCA, RDB, PSE etc.	95,7	100
4	Understanding of the business	91.5	90.9
5	Coping with business risks.	80.9	90.9

As shown in table 3, the five areas including (1) visioning, (2) communication, (3) networking and collaboration, (4) more understanding of the business environment, and (5) coping with business risks need to be improved. It is therefore important for both PHLIs and the government of Rwanda to closely collaborate in putting in place mechanisms that will facilitate graduates from higher learning institutions to achieve the requirements in order to

become entrepreneurs and thus create jobs rather than becoming job seekers.

### 3.6. Factors influencing young graduates

The table below shows the different factors which influence young graduates and consequently impact on their decision in becoming entrepreneurs.

**Table 4. Factors influencing graduates to become entrepreneurs**

Influencing Factors		Percentage (%)	
		DIE	EG & NEG
1	To be my own boss	100	87.6
2	To seize an opportunity to make a lot of	72.8	50.1
3	To achieve a sense of personal accomplishment	90.9	87.5
4	Frustrated in my previous job	63.7	50.0
5	Tenacity despite failure	81.8	75.1
6	Educational background	72.8	50.0
7	A chance to use my experience/skills	90.9	81.3
8	Dreamed of running my own business	90.9	81.3
9	Availability of capital	90.9	87.5
10	Government policies	90.9	87.6

Table 4 above highlights four major influencing factors to become/not become an entrepreneur. These include: self employment (own boss), government policies, availability of

capital, and a sense of personal accomplishment. However all the factors have been ranked over 50% by respondents of the two categories, “districts and independent

entrepreneurs”, and “employed and non-employed graduates”. This is a good indication that young graduates are developing a positive attitude towards becoming entrepreneurs and job creators. It also reflects on the government of Rwanda’s commitment to initiate and empower young entrepreneurs through programs such as Hanga Umurimo Project (HUP), Business Development Fund (BDF), and also Career Advisor Centers

established in all Higher Learning Institutions since 2009 to train and advise students not only as job seekers but also as job creators.

### 3.5. Perception by employers on potential entrepreneurship skills

The table below presents the potential entrepreneurship skills needed by graduates to perform the standards as expected by employees.

Table 5. Level of appreciation of the potentials entrepreneurship skills

Level of appreciation	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neither agree nor disagree	1	9.1	9.1	9.1
Agree	8	72.7	72.7	81.8
Strongly agree	2	18.2	18.2	100.0
Total	11	100.0	100.0	

Table 5 above indicates that over 90 % of the employers are satisfied by the performance of graduates from PHLIs. This therefore shows that the entrepreneurship skills provided by PHLIs are relevant for graduates to become independent entrepreneurs and would equally be able to create jobs for themselves.

### 3.6 Perception by employed and non employed graduates on skill got from PHLIs

Table 6 below represents the level at which graduates perceive the skills acquired towards entrepreneurship development and job creation.

Table 6. Level of skills towards job creation and entrepreneurship development

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neither agree nor disagree	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
Agree	11	68.8	68.8	75.0
Strongly agree	4	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	16	100.0	100.0	

As shown in Table 6 above, 93.8% of respondents (employed and non employed graduates) confirm that PHLIs provide substantial skills towards job creation and entrepreneurship development. This means that the training delivered by PHLIs is relevant for graduates to create their own businesses and hence provide jobs.

In this case, both employers and graduates have the similar perception (equal/over 90%) about the skills needed by graduates and provided by PHLs to be good in business.

**Table 7. Comparison of graduates from both private and public higher learning institutions**

Level of performance	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
High performance by graduates from public institutions	1	9.1	10.0	10.0
Approximately the same performance	9	81.8	90.0	100.0
Total	10	90.9	100.0	
Missing	1	9.1		
Total	11	100.0		

Table 7 above presents the comparison in terms of performance between graduates from both public and private higher learning institutions as perceived by different employers. Findings from the districts have revealed that there is no significant difference. This implies that, the quality of education provided by both private and public higher learning institutions is relatively similar in Rwanda. This confirms the hypothesis indicating that there is no significant difference in terms of performance

### 3.7 Comparison of PHLI graduates with Public HLI graduates on performance

The table 7 below compares the level of performance of graduates from PHLIs and graduates from Public Higher Learning Institutions.

between graduates from private and public higher learning institutions as perceived by their employers.

### 3.8 Impediments/Challenges to job creation

The table 8 below presents the obstacles to job creation as perceived by employed graduates and non employed graduates and the challenges to getting job for non employed graduates.

**Table 8: Impediments/ challenges to job creation**

Challenges	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Lack of capital	1	6.3	14.3	14.3
Valid Fear of risks	6	37.5	85.7	100.0
Total	7	43.8	100.0	
Missing System	9	56.3		
Total	16	100.0		

Table 8 above represents the number of respondents who pointed out that the major impediments to establishing their own enterprises. Although these respondents were asked to highlight the key impediments/challenges to job creation, among the challenges highlighted including; lack of capital, limited knowledge and skills, fear of risks, no available jobs and the mismatch of education and labour market needs, they emphasized that mainly lack of

capital and fear of risks were the major impediments.

### 3.9 Verification of the 1<sup>st</sup> Hypothesis from the side of academicians

The table 9 below presents the Chi-Square test for Private higher learning institutions. The chi-square test was run in order to establish the relationship between skills acquired and the potential for job creation.

**Table 9: Chi-Square test for academicians**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.088 <sup>a</sup>	6	.001
Likelihood Ratio	23.507	6	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.102	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	47		

Table 9 above indicates the calculated chi-square value is greater than the tabulated value. This therefore confirms that the null hypothesis is rejected. The calculated Chi-square value is 22.088 while the tabulated chi-square value is 12.592. It can also be concluded from the p-value (0.001) which is less than the

chosen significance level (0.05). Therefore, entrepreneurship skills provided by PHLIs do influence entrepreneurship potential and job creation among young graduates.

**3.10. Verification of the 1<sup>st</sup> Hypothesis from the side of employers**

establish the relationship of between the skills acquired and the attitude towards entrepreneurship development and job creation.

To verify the 1<sup>st</sup> hypothesis from the side of employers, chi-square test was run to

**Table 10: Chi square test for ddistricts and independent entrepreneurs**

Parameter	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.547	4	.818
Likelihood Ratio	2.306	4	.680
Linear-by-Linear Association	.010	1	.921
N of Valid Cases	11		

As shown in table 10 above, the calculated chi-square is less than the tabulated chi-square (i.e.  $1.547 < 9.488$ ). With regard to the p-value it is observed that p-value (0.818) is greater than the chosen significance level (0.05).

Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. Entrepreneurships skills acquired from PHLIs do not adequately influence the potential to be an entrepreneur or even become a job creator.

**3.11. Verification of the 1<sup>st</sup> Hypothesis from the side of graduates**

In order to verify the 1<sup>st</sup> hypothesis from the side of graduates, the chi-square test indicated that the skills acquired from PHLIs do not adequately facilitate them to neither become entrepreneurs nor be job creators.

**Table 11. Chi-Square test for graduates**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.167 <sup>a</sup>	4	.530
Likelihood Ratio	3.883	4	.422
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.533	1	.216
N of Valid Cases	16		

As presented in table 11 above, the calculated chi-square is less than the tabulated chi-square. (i.e.  $3.167 < 9.488$ ). From the p-value it is shown that p-value (0.530) is greater than the chosen significance level (0.05). Hence we accept the null hypothesis. Graduates

who are working and those who are not working equally find that entrepreneurship skills acquired from PHLIS do not adequately influence the potential to neither become entrepreneurs nor create jobs.

**4. Conclusion and recommendations**

Private Higher Learning Institutions (PHLIs) have enhanced a sustainable knowledge based economy and have also contributed towards achieving the Vision 2020 pillars namely;

-human resource development and building knowledge based economy. PHLIs have enhanced the performance of entrepreneurs up to 67.3%. This figure is an average of the responses from the informants investigated from the surveyed institutions and individuals.

- there is a relationship between the entrepreneurship skills provided through PHLIs and the level of performance from graduates. Both graduates from public and private institutions have no difference in terms of performance.
- there are several factors beyond classroom training that influence young graduates towards becoming entrepreneurs.

In light of the research findings, the following recommendations were made: Post training education programs for the young graduates, establishment of a monitoring and evaluation framework in order to follow up on the factors that affect the performance of young entrepreneurs, tailor-made programs to be introduced in PHLIs to respond to the market needs.

Career advisory centres would be reinforced in order to guide, support and empower graduates towards entrepreneurship development and job creation.

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