IMPACT OF OUTSOURCING ON CLEANING SERVICE QUALITY: A STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS

IKENWA, KENNETH O. & *OLUSEGUN, BAMIDELE SOLOMON

Department of Business Administration, University of Lagos, Akoka
*Procurement Unit, University of Lagos
Email: kikenwa@unilag.edu.ng Alt. email: kennethikenwa@gmail.com
**Corresponding author email: bolusegun@unilag.edu.ng

Abstract

This study examines the impact of outsourcing on cleaning service quality in UNILAG. Primary data using questionnaires were collected from 43 members of staff of the institution selected using purposive sampling. Data generated were analysed using descriptive and inferential (t-test) statistic. The result of the t-test revealed that t = 5.790 and p = 0.000 and since p ≤ 0.05 it thus means that there is significant difference in cleaning service quality before and after outsourcing. This by implication means that the quality of cleaning service improved after it was outsourced. With the satisfaction achieved through outsourcing cleaning functions, the study recommends that the university may need to consider outsourcing other not too strategic non-core support activities for improved administrative efficiency and resource appropriation.

Keywords: Outsourcing, Quality, Cost reduction, Service provider, Servqual.

INTRODUCTION

Outsourcing which is a cost saving strategic alternative developed in part as response to the over-diversification strategies of the 1970s and early 1980s. Companies then looked to spread their business risk by diversifying into a number of different business areas through mergers and acquisitions. In the majority of cases, the diversification strategy was not successful, as the acquiring organizations basically lacked the skills and knowledge to be effective in new business areas. Many organizations reviewed their activities and decided to escalate their resource strengths and capabilities on core activities and outsource the non-core activities not critical to their key functional areas and overall bottom line to external service providers who specialize in provision of these non-core products or services (Harland, Knight, Lamming & Walker, 2005; Zafar & Dad, 2013).

Outsourcing takes place when an organization decides to transfer the responsibility of performing its non-core activities which were previously carried out internally by members of staff employed in the organization to an external body so that, the organization can focus on their core activities. Tertiary institutions such as the Universities, in their quest to ensure cost effectiveness, improved service delivery and remain competitive amidst dwindling economic resources are beginning to resort to outsourcing. The

important roles University education play in a nation's social and economic development cannot be overemphasized. Hence, efforts are made to see to its survival. However, in recent times, Universities in developing countries including Nigeria, and especially those existing under the public sector education framework, have been confronted with the issue of poor or underfunding which has hampered its growth. Nigerian Universities, following the National Outsourcing Strategy and Institutional Framework of the Federal Government of Nigeria introduced in 2007, have now keyed into the outsourcing strategy in order to make- up for the insufficient fund allocation from the government taking cue from other sectors of the economy such as the manufacturing and banking. Universities now outsource some of their non-core (support)services such as cleaning, laundry, library, facilities management, bookshop, security and information technology so that they can focus more on their core objectives which are teaching, research and community service.

There have been mixed feelings about the impact of outsourcing particularly in the area of cost reduction and improved service delivery. Following this, it is important to note that the outsourcing dialectics is strong to the extent that, a school of thought has argued that outsourcing does not necessarily bring about the expected cost reduction (Lancellotti, Schein & Stadler, 2003; Mol, Pauwels, Matthyssens & Quintens, 2004), while another school of thought in favour of outsourcing have argued that outsourcing to contractors can deliver the same quality of service if not better than what the in-house personnel can offer even at a reduced cost (Thompson, Strickland & Gamble, 2005; Hitt, Ireland & Hoskisson, 2007; Grant, 2010). Very recently, many Universities in Nigeria have outsourced some of their support services with the objectives of reducing cost and achieving value for money through improved service delivery (Ogbogu, 2017). While there are reports of cost reduction and improved service as a result of outsourcing in some quarters, there are insinuations that some of such services have been poorly provided by the external contractors with no value for money. For instance, Herath, Wickramasinghe and Indran (2010) through a case study analysis of higher education in Sri Lanka recounted that, there were reports of unsatisfactory quality of service even at a high cost and that the performances of outsourcing vendors in terms of quality, efficiency and effectiveness were of low level or at best at a moderate level compared to the expectations of the clients. There is also the risk of choosing poor or unskilled service provider which may badly affect service delivery particularly where the client has entered a long contract duration. Phipps and Merisotis (2005) observed that outsourcing is prevalent in universities. However, not much is known to be able to make a sound conclusion about the possibility of outsourcing in reducing costs considerably.

It is against this background that the present study attempts an empirical investigation into the decision taken by the University of Lagos (UNILAG) Management to outsource its cleaning services six years ago. Specifically, the study undertakes a comparative quantitative analysis of the "before outsourcing and after outsourcing" outcomes of cleaning services with a view to find out which between the two periods has impacted the University more in terms of quality service delivery.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Concept, Drivers, Benefits and Drawbacks of Outsourcing in Universities
A ubiquity of studies reveals that outsourcing has been defined from a melange of perspectives. Dakare and Ikenwa (2016) observed that these definitions usually fall under the categories of content, context and process perspectives. Resolving this definition vertigo is beyond the scope of this paper. Gilley and Rasheed (2000) defined outsourcing as procuring something that was never originally sourced internally....or could have been sourced internally notwithstanding the decision to go outside. Peng (2014) defined outsourcing as turning over an organizational activity to an outside supplier that will perform it on the behalf of the focal firm. While Hitt *et al.* (2007) defined it as the purchase of a value-creating activity from an external supplier.

Outsourcing has also been defined as a process strategy which involves a firm contracting out the production process or service delivery activity within its value and supply chain induced with benefits of reduced production process and transaction economics costs (Dakare & Ikenwa, 2016). Outsourcing has also been referred to as "vertical disintegration". Vertical disintegration which is the reverse of vertical integration takes place when the value chain activities of an organization are contracted out to be performed by another organization that can perform it more economically (Gilley and Rasheed, 2000, as cited in Kazmi, 2008). For the purpose of this study, we define outsourcing as, a production or service efficiency strategic alternative aimed at increased resource appropriation from value chain activities which are not the focal activities of an organization's core business or its key functional areas. We posit that, when outsourcing is properly integrated into the operations strategy of an organization it enhances the organization's strategic flexibility and strategic efficiency and strategic competitiveness.

The decision to outsource is usually a hard one for business managers to make, as it involves the organization taking a critical analysis of the probable cost savings against the costs of losing control over the service. This decision is even harder for public sector administrators and managers to make owing to the difficulty that arises from shifting between grasping the marginal social benefits of a particular expenditure decision vis-a-vis the marginal social costs

accruing from that decision. Therefore, the dominant logic behind outsourcing decisions in Nigerian Universities is that, rather than spending so much on activities that are not basic primary activities, managers of these Universities now outsources them to external contractors to provide the services.

Reasons why universities outsource are numerous. It ranges from the need to cut down expenses to transferring of cost-related risks to external service providers. The leading motive for outsourcing is the desire to ensure competitiveness which makes organizations to outsource where others can do it better which in return leads to reduction of its cost base (Baily, Farmer, Crocker, Jessop & Jones, 2015). Similarly, Franceschini, Galetto, Pignatelli and Varetto (2003) assert that, business would want to outsource for the basic reasons of achieving cost efficiency and production reorganization.

Evidences of the positive impacts of outsourcing in public sector in terms of cost reduction and improved service are well documented in extant literature. Public Sector outsourcing such as is practiced in Universities is usually based on the need to reduce cost while improving service delivery in a manner that brings about value for money. Isaksson and Lantz, (2015) posit that organizations consider their outsourcing decision to be fruitful when the benefits realised by the outsourcing are more than the costs of carrying out the activities in-house.

On the other hand, many negative impacts have been associated with outsourcing such as unrealised savings, hidden costs (Kakabadse & Kakabadse, 2000b) and risk of losing technology, company confidential data (Katz-stone, 2000), and the cost of losing control (McEachern, 2003). The failure of outsourcing has from certain quarters been attributed to the to lack of proper cost benefits analysis, failure of the organization to select an appropriate supplier leading to poor performance of the outsourced activities, improbable expectations of the outsource provider due to overstated promises, poorly designed contract terms and agreement devoid of well-defined key performance indicators, which means that it is difficult to establish where things are going wrong. To this end, Johnston and Johnston (n.d.) advanced the following factors as being responsible for failure in outsourcing strategy. They include, short-term focus, strategy misalignment, poor risk management/risk planning, culture and geography, personnel behaviour, competitive security and public opinion. It is believed that all these can be avoided if the outsourcing exercise is carefully planned within a defined strategic framework. In view of this position, Leiblein, Reuer and Dalsace (2002) maintain that, "As with other strategic management process decisions, careful study must be required before [an organization] decides to engage in outsourcing" (as cited in Hitt *et al.,* 2007, p. 93). Emphasis ours.

Outsourcing and Improved Quality Service

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) describe service quality as customer's overall judgment or perception concerning a service. It refers to the extent to which a service achieves customer satisfaction. Thus, quality is said to be achieved when service performance exceeds or exactly meets client's expectation. It brings about value for money. The cost of service may be expensive due to quality service rendered; however, the value derived would worth the cost. It is important to note that the objective of government spending is not necessarily to acquire service at a cheap price but to obtain a commensurate value for the service paid for.

As identified in literature, the need to achieve quality service is one of the major reasons organization decide to outsource. Pahiranthan (2017) asserts that quality of service can be a main factor when clients resolve which business strategy to adopt in meeting their needs.   Even though cleaning service is a non-core activity in an academic environment, cleanliness of the environment is crucial to the well-being of the students, lecturers and the academic community as a whole. A well cleaned environment prevents spread of diseases. No student wants to read in a filthy environment. No staff can work well in a dirty environment. Hence, it must be kept clean always. Suffice it to say that any University that is desirous of achieving its primary objectives which are teaching, research and community service would at some point in time need to think of outsourcing its support services such as cleaning and information technology, despite the perceived dangers associated with outsourcing.

However, authors are divided in their opinions on the potential of outsourcing in ensuring quality service. Hence mixed results exist. For instance, Muraguri, Ng'ang'a and Omondi (2015) discovered from their study of the effect of outsourcing cleaning functions on service quality in public Universities in Kenya that outsourced cleaning services give better quality service than those provided by internal cleaning service staff. Furthermore, it was revealed that cleaning service though cost more; a higher value for money was achieved. On the contrary, a study conducted by Domberger, Hall and Li (1995) in an analysis public institutions in New South Wales, Australia, while using a two equation econometric model with data from sixty-on (61) cleaning service contracts, presented evidence which showed that, while the quality of cleaning services rendered by cleaning agencies was maintained, (that is, neither changed or improved), the prices were lowered as moderated by competitive tendering and contracting. In a survey in the same area studied by Domberger *et al.,* (1995), Fraser (1997) reported a decline of cleaning service quality provided by cleaning agencies *ex-post* introduction of competitive tendering, and contracting out of cleaning services.

We therefore hypothesize that:

H_1: *There is no significant difference in cleaning service quality before and after outsourcing in the University of Lagos*

Theoretical Basis for Outsourcing in Universities

There are many theories that underpin outsourcing decision making. However, this study is grounded on the Transaction Cost Theory (TCT)which was employed to elucidate on the determinant of outsourcing decision in public Universities. The core assumptions of the theory and how it helps to explore the subject matter under empirical investigation and discourse are presented in synopsis below.

Transaction Cost Theory (TCT)

Transaction cost theory which was further advanced by Williamson (1979; 1994) following the early proposition by Coase (1937), is anchored on the premise that business transactions that involve external party usually come with a cost known as transaction costs. These transaction costs are direct and indirect expenditures incurred in the process of negotiating, monitoring, and implementing contractual agreement between the participating organizations. The proponents of this theory argue that managers of organizations are likely to carry out any business activity that will incur low transaction costs in-house while those requiring higher cost of transactions are likely to be outsourced to external contractors to handle. Wachira, Brookes and Haines (2016) maintain that postulations from the TCT would suggest for example that outsourcing as a strategy would help to reduce transaction costs which in turn reduces the size of the organization, and makes its more productive. Such reduction, they advocate include reduction in employees and physical assets among other items in an organization.

TCT emphasises that, organizations such as the Universities may decide to outsource their support activities such as cleaning even when they have the resources both financial and human to execute the activity provided the total cost of executing the activity through the external service provider is less compared to what it requires to do it in-house. Outsourcing in UNILAG involves a procurement process, which includes pre-contract, contract and the post contract stages. At every stage of the process, costs are incurred. The costs include amongst others, those expended on advertisement, evaluation of bids, project costs, compliance, supervisory and monitoring costs, and sometimes litigation costs.

Empirical Studies on Outsourcing in Universities

The debate on the possibility of realising cost reduction and improved quality service particularly in an academic environment seems unending because of the conflicting empirical findings on the subject of outsourcing. Adebayo and Aderinto (2017) investigated the socio-economic costs of security services

outsourcing in selected institutions in Ogun State Nigeria. Their findings revealed that outsourcing security services from Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) brought significant pressures on the dwindling IGR of the selected institutions. Similarly, Mohammed, Sani and Musa (2018) through a survey of outsourcing as an alternative for higher education financing (HEF) in Nigeria using Adamawa State University and Gombe State University as case study reiterated the fact that outsourcing is a vital means of improving IGR in higher institution and therefore serve as additional means of financing the institutions.

Mohammed, Abebe, and Wondim (2019) carried out a survey on satisfaction of University community on in-house sourcing versus outsourcing among selected government Universities in Ethiopia. The research found out that outsourcing afforded the universities opportunity to achieve improvement in resource management, reduction in administrative burden, staff complains, operational and recruitment cost. In addition, an increase in quality of service delivery was documented. Muraguri, Ng'ang'a, and Omondi (2015) carried out a study in public universities in Kenya on the effects of outsourced cleaning activities on service quality. The study revealed that there is significant difference between service quality of outsourced and in house cleaning activities. They concluded that outsourcing cleaning services was tantamount to enhanced service quality. Arisi- Nwugballa (2016) adopted a field survey approach to find out whether outsourcing improves quality of service in public healthcare institutions in South- East Nigeria. The findings revealed that outsourcing yielded significant improvements in the quality through the outsourced services.

Using quantitative analysis, Ogbogu (2017) carried out an evaluation of outsourcing process in a Nigerian University. Findings from the study indicated that outsourcing has improved the quality of services provided, reduced cost, increased efficiency and allowed the university to concentrate more on its core activities. Furthermore, in an investigation into the effects of outsourcing strategy on procurement performance among Universities in Kenya carried out by Nyangau, Mburu and Ogolla (2014), findings showed that the main determinant of procurement performance among these Universities were contracting, comprehensive outsourcing, licensing agreement and selective outsourcing strategies. Prempeh and Nsiah-Asare (2017) replicated the study with the same set of variables among technical Universities in Ghana and reported similar findings.

On the whole, suffices to mention that, despite the fact that outsourcing is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria , a review of existing literature on public sector outsourcing scheme have revealed that there is paucity of empirical studies on outsourcing in Nigeria universities. Most of the studies carried out are theoretical and anecdotal, and are based on the perception of the authors. This

is a gap the present study intends to fill.

METHODOLOGY

To facilitate the attainment of the overall aim of this study, a methodological triangulation which involved the adoption of a descriptive survey method to obtain data from the respondents selected using purposive sampling, and who are employees of the University of Lagos, as well as, an interview method was combined. According to Marshall (2002, p. 89), "[Triangulation]....gives some degree of confidence that the conclusions which emanate from a study will not be theory bound or assumption bound". Survey method which will help collect primary quantitative data through structured questionnaire was considered suitable for the study as its help to gather people's opinion about the decision taken by the management of the institution to outsource cleaning function. The interview method provided primary qualitative data which represented first hand evaluation from respondents' personal perspectives on the outsourced cleaning service quality outcomes. The data was used to complement the interpretation of the quantitative data. The outsourcing decision factor measured in the study is quality effectiveness.

The questionnaire was divided into two parts: Part A contains respondent's personal information such as gender, years of service, department/unit and educational qualification. Part B of the questionnaire covers the opinion of respondents on the cleaning service quality before and after it was outsourced using SERVQUAL model which has five distinct dimensions namely: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy as developed by Parasuraman, *et al*. (1988). The SERVQUAL model dimensions were rephrased into sixteen statements.

Therefore, respondents were asked to rank their agreement with the statements based on a four-point Likert scale as follows: 4 = strongly agree, 3= agree, 2= disagree and 1= strongly disagree. Records obtained from the personnel saddled with responsibility of implementing the janitorial cleaning contract shows that the cleaning service locations were divided into two main parts: Academic/ Administrative building and Halls of residence. There are thirty-five (35) academic / administrative buildings in the universities captured under the contracts and ten (10) halls of residence. Altogether, the cleaning service providers are expected to work in fifty-four (54) different locations on campus. To ensure effective monitoring each of the locations has client's representatives which could either be Dean, Heads of Department/units or Directors. These client's representatives evaluate the performances of the service providers on a periodical basis. For the purpose of this study, client's representatives were used as the respondents. The authors considered the client's representatives as appropriate respondents since they have direct contacts with the service providers and are the ones who rate their performances.

Accordingly, fifty-four (54) questionnaires were given out. However, only forty-three (43) questionnaires were considered useful for the study. This constitutes 79.6% response rate.   This response rate is acceptable when compared to the recommended cut-off rate of 20% by Ojha and Gokhale (2009), and the 30% response rate which according to Fischer (2004) in the case of a general questionnaire is very good. In order to ascertain the reliability of the scale adopted for the study, Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each dimension of the SERVQUAL were calculated. The average reliability test result is 0. 817. According to Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin (2013), a scale is said to be reliable if the alpha value is more than 0.60. Therefore, all the scales are considered appropriate. Descriptive statistics such as mean, deviation and percentage were used to analyse data collected on the personal information of the respondents while the hypothesis formulated for the study was tested using t-test which measures the significance of the difference between the quality of outsourcing cleaning service and in-sourcing cleaning service.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
The analysis was done in two parts. The first part which analysed the bio-data of the respondents made use of descriptive statistic while the other part made use of t-test analysis to know if there exists any significant difference in the cleaning service quality before and after outsourcing. At each stage of the discussion of findings, comments made by the respondents during interviews were used to shed light on the quantitative outcomes.

Profile of the Respondents
From the responses as contained in Table 1, it can be deduced that there are more male respondents than the female. Specifically, there are 58.1% male respondents while the female are 41.9% of the total population sampled. Analysis of the respondent's level of education revealed that 13.9% are first degree holder, 58.1% hold Master's degree while 28% are PhD holders. This infers that the respondents are educated and could understand and answer the questions properly. On the numbers of years the respondents have spent in the university, more than 85% of the respondents have spent over five years in the university. The implication of this is that the respondents can adequately give reliable information on before and after comparative analysis of outsourcing of janitorial service in the university since the new initiative started five years ago.

Table 1: Profile of the respondents

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent %
Sex		
Male	25	58.1
Female	18	41.9
Total	**43**	
Level of Education		
BSc /HND	06	13.9
MSc	25	58.1
PhD	12	28
Others	-	
Total	**43**	
Years spent in the university		
Less than 5 years	5	11.6
5- 9 years	11	25.6
10-14 years	9	20.9
15- 19 year	11	25.6
20 years and above	7	16.3
Total	**43**	

Source: Field Survey, (2019).

Perception of Respondents on Cleaning Service Quality before and after Outsourcing

The mean score and standard deviation of perception of the respondents on cleaning service quality before and after outsourcing using the five dimensions of SERVQUAL is presented in table 2. The computed mean score revealed that average mean score of the perception of respondents on service quality in terms of tangibles are 2.99 for after outsourcing and 2.55 for before outsourcing. Tangible in terms of outsourcing quality measures the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication material. From the data analysed, more of the respondents agreed that the service providers make use of modern equipment which makes their work more efficient than the in-house cleaners. To buttress this claim, one of the respondents said during interview *"we now have big and clean wastebasket in our locations. The kind of tipper used by the contractors are such that can pack dirt at once no matter the volume without littering the environment as it was the case before now. Our furniture is dusted using vacuum cleaners. I can say confidently that our environment is cleaner than before"*.

On reliability, which addresses ability to achieve the quality service accurately as assured, the respondents rated the service providers higher than the in-house with the average mean of 3.02 for after outsourcing and 2.66 for before outsourcing. They claim that contractors keep their promises when they make one. A respondent mentioned during interview that "*If a contractor promised to clean a place I go to sleep because I know they will do it. If they don't I will*

report them and probably refuse to sign their appraisal. Meaning they will be denied their pay and you know no company wants to be denied its pay. But our own people will promise and still not fulfil their promise. Some of them are difficult to control particularly the elderly ones among them".

On responsiveness, which measures the level of promptness of cleaners to request made by client's representatives, the respondents agreed that the outsourcing cleaning service provider act promptly to request than the in-house cleaners with the mean score of 3.27 for after outsourcing and 2.72 for after outsourcing . A respondent said during interview "*I give it to the contractors when it comes to promptness to request. I could remember a time when we were expecting accreditation team and we had to call the contractors a day before the accreditation, I was amazed at their response. It was swift and they did the job in good time despite the volume of the work they had to do. We would not have tried that with our staff. In fact, the bureaucracy of getting people to clean a place is time consuming".*

On assurance which addresses ability of the cleaners to make client feel safe and assured that there will be solution to their problems, again the cleaning service providing companies were rated higher with the mean score of 3.30 for after outsourcing and 2.64 for before outsourcing. A respondent had this to say "*The outsourcing companies have a way of proffering solutions to problems, I love them for this*"

On empathy which addresses provision of caring, individualized attention to customer the outsourcing cleaning service providers were rated higher with a mean score of3.16 after and 2.61 before outsourcing. One respondent said "*one of things that makes the contractors a little better than our staff is the fact that they have a flexible working hour. If I tell them I am busy they cannot work now they will cheerfully say no problem madam let us know when you are free and when you call at that time they will come.*"

Table 2: Perception of respondents on cleaning service quality after and before outsourcing

	AFTER		BEFORE	
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std
Tangibles				
use modern cleaning equipment	2.84	.871	2.37	.691
cleaners always look neat	2.74	.492	2.23	.718
cleaning equipment are visually good	3.40	.623	3.07	.393
AVERAGE	**2.99**		**2.55**	
Reliability				
do what they promise at the right time	2.93	.593	2.60	.728
show sincere interest in solving clients problem	3.12	.662	2.77	.751
when promised to do something by a certain time, they do.	3.02	.672	2.63	.691
AVERAGE	**3.02**		**2.66**	
Responsiveness				
give prompt service	3.23	.611	2.74	.693
are always willing to help	3.28	.666	2.70	.773
are never too busy to respond to client request	3.30	.558	2.72	.734
AVERAGE	**3.27**		**2.72**	
Assurance				
relate with courtesy	3.23	.684	2.70	.708
have the knowledge to answer questions	3.33	.644	2.62	.661
Clients always feel safe when dealing with service providers	3.35	.650	2.60	.623
AVERAGE	**3.30**		**2.64**	
Empathy				
give individual attention	3.14	.743	2.58	.698
carry out their activities at hours convenient to clients	3.21	.675	2.67	.808
have the best interest of clients at heart	3.16	.652	2.67	.778
deal with clients in a caring	3.16	.754	2.55	.739
AVERAGE	**3.16**		**2.61**	

Source: Field survey, (2019).

Test of Hypothesis

In this study, comparative evaluation of before and after outsourcing cleaning service was undertaken with the purpose of examining which of the two impact more on the cleaning environment in terms of quality cleaning service delivery. The hypothesis tested state that:

Ho: *There is no significant difference in cleaning service quality before and after outsourcing in the University of Lagos*

H1: *There is significant difference in cleaning service quality before and after outsourcing in the University of Lagos*

The hypothesis was tested using one sample t-test and the result is as stated in Table 3-4

Table 3: Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	After	3.1526	43	.38438	.05862
	Before	2.6402	43	.40165	.06125

Table 4 : Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	After - Before	.51246	.58034	.08850	.33386	.69106	5.790	42	.000

Thus calculated T= 5.790 and with a *p*value = .000. Since $p \leq 0.05$ as shown in table 4, the null hypothesis that states that there is no service quality difference between the outsourced and in house cleaning services in the University of Lagos is rejected. This implies that the quality of cleaning service improved after it was outsourced. This finding is consistent with Muraguri, Ng'ang'a, and Omondi (2015), Arisi- Nwugballa (2016), Mohammed, Abebe and Wondim (2019), who posited that outsourcing improves service quality.

CONCLUSION
In this study, we carried out a *t*-test analysis of the "before and after" outsourcing impact on the cleaning quality service in UNILAG. From the analysis of the data obtained, the general perception of the respondents was that outsourcing has positively impacted on the quality of cleaning services in the institution. This has further confirmed the claim that outsourcing as a vertical disintegration strategy has the potential of ensuring improved service particularly when the right service providers are engaged coupled with effective supervision as it is the case in University of Lagos. The study concludes by recommending that the university should give outsourcing of other non-core functions a priority, predicating outsourcing decisions on due diligence, pilot engagements, scaling up of service and quality specifications, strategic evaluation, monitoring and control of the outsourced activity.

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