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Sustainable Outsourcing of Students Catering Services at Institutions of Higher Learning in Harare during the Hyper Inflationary Period: 2003-2008

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Abstract

This study was carried out to establish the perceptions of students, principals, dean of students and finance officers on outsourcing of catering services at institutions of higher learning in Harare during the period of the hyperinflation period in Zimbabwe. The variables in the study addressed issues that uncovered the impact, effects and value created through outsourcing catering services at institutions of higher learning. A survey was conducted in which four institutions of higher learning participated. Two types of data collection instruments were used. These were interview schedules and questionnaires. The questionnaires were used to collect data from three hundred and sixty students, (ninety from each institution) at four institutions of higher learning in Harare. Face to face interviews with key respondents comprising four Principals of colleges and one university dean of students and four finance officers at each of the institutions selected using purposive sampling were conducted. The proposition of the study was; outsourcing non-core business improves operational efficiencies of an organization, reduces operational costs and improves company focus. The major findings of the study were that students expressed discontent with regards the vendor's service quality and customer relations. Outsourcing of catering services created value at institutions through shedding off non-core activities and focusing on the core business of education, training and researching. The findings of the study enabled the researcher to arrive at a conclusion on sustainable outsourcing of catering. Recommendations to build a legal contract with clear objectives and service level expectations of the outsourcing institution were made.

Introduction of the Study

Outsourcing is a management philosophy in which the task level management responsibility rests with the supplier. Samuel (1996) observes that there is the aspect of transfer of control because the organization does not instruct the supplier how to perform his/her task, but would focus on communicating results it expects to buy. Constantunos and Woods (1999) note that outsourcing leaves the whole process of accomplishing results to the supplier, thus the organization is not devoting its resources to areas that are not in its expertise. The Ministry of Higher Education in Zimbabwe adopted this cost-sharing concept of outsourcing in view of the fact that

expansion in tertiary education over the years had not been accompanied by increases in the allocation of resources in real terms as the nation experienced chronic inflation and eventually hyperinflation. Hyperinflation could be defined as very high inflation, a condition in which prizes increase rapidly as a currency loses its value. ([Http://crisistimes.com](http://crisistimes.com) 2010). Adverse macro-economic conditions and increased competition for scarce public funds had reduced Government's capacity to support Higher Education. (Ministry Of Higher Education And Technology Sub-contracting-progress report 2000).

As part of the Reform Programme to revitalize the economy, Higher and Tertiary education made a decision to subcontract cleaning, security, grounds maintenance and laundry. (Survey of current and potential outsourcing end users 1998). Subcontracting of catering function was no exception hence it was outsourced last. (Subcontracting Programme progress report 2001).

Ent of the Problem

In tertiary education institutions, during the mid (1990s), salaries budgets for civil servants were very high and they impacted negatively on the ailing economy during the period of chronic inflation and hyperinflation. Outsourcing of catering services in tertiary education institutions was inevitable along with other non-core activities. Catering services are basically concerned with the provision of three meals per day for students, lecturers, administrative staff, individuals and groups in the neighborhood. However on outsourcing the catering function, the target customers apparently were not receiving the hospitality services they expected. For example they claimed that food sold to them was of poor quality. To that end the researcher sought to carry out a study on outsourcing of student catering services at institutions of higher learning.

Objectives

The purpose of the study was to find out the extent to which outsourcing catering services has created value and benefitted the institutions that were studied during the hyperinflationary period. The study was guided by the objectives which sought to establish:

- (a) The effects of outsourcing on the operational efficiency at institutions of higher learning
- (b) The effects of outsourcing catering on the operational costs at institutions of higher learning
- (c) The impacts of outsourcing on service quality in institutions of higher learning.
- (d) Value creation at institutions of higher learning through outsourcing catering

LITERATURE REVIEW

In general, outsourcing is considered to be that part of an organization's process, which it sources from outside suppliers. (Mol, Van Tulder and Beije 2005). These tasks are outsourced through building sustainable contracts with identified suppliers who are able to provide quality services in their areas of expertise. The choice of what functions to outsource and which to keep in-house is based on the need to develop skills, and improve in competence in core activities kept in-house. (Harris, 2000; and Nayak, et al., 2007). Samuel (1996), an expert in the field of outsourcing says that outsourcing is a management tool for organizational change, for competitive advantage and for the shareholder or stakeholder value. In today's literature there are many advocates for outsourcing at higher education institutions. For example Jeffreis (1996) assert that to remain competitive and to improve service in the face of declining resources, higher education has increasingly turned to several management approaches, including outsourcing. These advocates of outsourcing argue that the private sector provides service more efficiently and at a lower cost than the public sector which is unmotivated by profit. Everest Consultants (2002) closely examined the outsourcing process to understand how and where outsourcing creates value. They observed that each new component of value builds on the results of what came before, improving and changing ever increasing areas of the company's deepest concerns.

In this research the argument is on how management can build a sustainable contract when outsourcing the catering function at institutions of higher learning. The researcher subscribes to Goldstein, Kemper, Rush and Bookman (1993)'s position when they note that focusing first on understanding how the functional area whose service have to be outsourced is currently operated and examining all its strength and weaknesses enables the institution to make a fully informed choice. Jeffries (1996) who advocate for outsourcing note that colleges and universities are testing these theories, thereby increasingly outsourcing more of their functions in an effort to reduce costs, increase service efficiency and boost income.

Institutions of higher learning in Zimbabwe adopted the outsourcing strategy when the nation started experiencing chronic inflation at the turn of the century. Inflation rate stood at 113% in March 2003. Such a rise in the cost of living reduced the quantity of diversity of food items that could be afforded. (Vulnerability in Zimbabwe 2002-2003). Inflation reached 624% in 2004, 1730% in 2006, and rose to 11000% in June 2007. As of July 2008 the value of ZWD had fallen to approximately 688 billion per 1USD, thus the annual inflation was 23100000% and prizes were doubling every 17.3 days. In November 2008 prizes were doubling every 24.7 hours when the economy was classified under the top six worst hyperinflations in world history. ([Http://en.wikipedia.org/hyperinflation2010](http://en.wikipedia.org/hyperinflation2010)). The chronic inflation

and the eventual hyperinflation had ripple effects on the food industry. Absolute food shortages placed great stress on communities. ([Http://allafrica.com/stories/2003](http://allafrica.com/stories/2003)) Institutions of higher learning were no exception, hence the need to outsource catering services. The decision to officially adopt multiple currencies in January 2009 for transacting business following a spectacular collapse of the local currency spelt the end of an era of hyperinflation and food shortages. ([Http://en.wikipedia.org/hyperinflation2010](http://en.wikipedia.org/hyperinflation2010)).

Literature review also revealed that from some studies examining the impact of outsourcing, there have been several key advantages of outsourcing identified, such as cost savings (Verhoef, 2005; Bardhan et al., 2006), reduced capital investment within the organization (Gilley and Rasheed, 2000; McFarlan and Nolan, 1995), improved responsiveness to changes in the business environment (Dess et al., 1995), an increased focus on core competencies (Kotabe and Murray, 1990; Venkatraman, 1989; Saunders et al., 1997), to name a few.

There are effects of outsourcing on operational efficiencies. Once a function is outsourced there is collective responsibility between the supplier providing the services and the organization that outsources. This may lead to staff accountability and supervision wars between supplier and buyer. ([Http://www.valuecreationgroup.com](http://www.valuecreationgroup.com)). Outsourcing service providers or suppliers handle many processes from different organizations and in many cases may even provide services to organizations that are rivals or direct competitors of each other. There may be an emergency of new competitors and loss in service competitiveness which can be a drawback on outsourcing organization. ([Http://www.bizbrim.com/outsourcing](http://www.bizbrim.com/outsourcing)). Other negative effects of outsourcing may be poor quality of service, inconsistent product or service output, problematic language skills leading to customer dissatisfaction. ([Eziearticles.com/effects of outsourcing jobs 2010](http://Eziearticles.com/effects-of-outsourcing-jobs-2010))

Outsourcing to a supplier can provide predictable costs at college or university. All jobs of the outsourced function are shifted from the institution to the supplier of services thus reducing the pay roll costs. (Ender and Mooney 1994). On the part of the workers outsourcing may result in decreased salaries and benefits. One of the drawbacks of outsourcing is when an organization actually increases its spending structure without its knowledge, particularly due to the hidden costs in an inflationary environment ([Http://www.contentmanagement softwaesr.net](http://www.contentmanagementsoftwaesr.net))

Methodology

The research design used in this study was a survey. Sidhu (1984) says that a survey is that method of investigation which attempts to describe and interpret what exists at present in the form of conditions, practices, processes, trends, effects to name a few.

Population

The population for this study was made up of students from four educational institutions in Harare namely University of Zimbabwe, Belvedere Technical Teachers College, Seke Teachers College and Morgan ZINTEC.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

A sample comprising 360 students was selected using random systematic sampling. Three college principals, university dean of students at the University, four finance personnel were selected using purposive sampling. The whole sample size was three hundred and sixty eight respondents.

Research Instruments

In this survey, questionnaires as well as interview schedules were used as data gathering tools. The questionnaire had several closed questions and one open ended question. Issues addressed by the questionnaire included demographic characteristics of respondents, residential status, students perceptions of the adopted outsourcing philosophy in catering services, effects and problems encountered after outsourcing catering services. The interview instrument had open ended questions. Issues addressed in the interview for principals and dean of students included views of the respondent on procedural matters on outsourcing, terms of the contract, value created and issues of concern with regards service quality resulting from outsourcing catering at institutions under study. Issues addressed in the interview schedule for finance officers included objectives of outsourcing, budgets before and after outsourcing catering. Cost benefit per student per term after outsourcing.

Data Analysis

Data gathered through the questionnaires was presented in frequency table and descriptive narrations. All data from interviews was analyzed in descriptive narrations.

Findings

Data that answers the four research questions are presented in this section. First to be presented are responses from students followed by the dean of students and responses from financial offices are presented last.

Responses from Students

Responses from students addressed the following questions:

Residential Status of Students

The findings revealed that 50 % of the respondents resided at college while 50 % resided outside college campus. This implies that half of students required food services of catering vendor subcontracted to college and the other half could be buying their foods from other sources such as houses, which were close to their institution.

Student's impression about outsourcing catering services

All respondents constituting 100% indicated that they were not happy with the outsourcing of catering services. The findings reflected that there was complete discontent with the outsourcing of catering services.

Students' views with regards to need to be consulted before outsourcing was effected,

Findings reflected that 100 % of respondents wanted to be consulted before outsourcing. This shows that all students did not have an input to the outsourcing process.

Food quality comparison between the contracted vendor and nearby houses.

The majority of the respondents (89 %) indicated that the quality of food prepared in the nearby houses was better than food prepared by the supplier of catering services. 11 % of respondents said that food prepared by the supplier of catering services at their college was better. This shows that food caterers at colleges needed to improve their service quality and make it more competitive.

Customer relations of catering vendor as seen by students

The findings reflected that 67 % of respondents indicated that the supplier of catering services had poor customer relations. 33% of the respondents reported that the catering vendor had good customer relations. This reflects that most students were not happy with the customer care that they received from the suppliers at college.

Students' option once the catering vendors improve their service quality

All respondents indicated that once the suppliers of catering services improved their service quality the students would buy meals from them. This shows that students would opt to buy food from the supplier of catering services as long as the service quality improved.

Problems faced by students from outsourcing

Figure 1 shows that two hundred and sixty (260) respondents indicated that sometimes they experienced stomach pains after meals which they related to food served to them by the supplier of catering services. This indicated that the catering companies' staff members were not well skilled to prepare good quality meals.

Figure 1 also shows that two hundred and twenty two (222) respondents said that meals were prepared by the catering supplier were made using from substandard ingredients. Therefore students found dishes unappealing.

Figure 1 also indicates that hundred and ten (210) respondents said that some non-resident students would not attend lectures dreading hunger at college, so they remained at home once they ran out of funds.

Figure 1 also reveals that two hundred and seven (207) respondents said that students resorted to eating foods of minimal nutritive value, as they could not afford to buy nutritious dishes. This meant that such students were going on without a simple descent meals throughout the day and so they were at risk of developing nutritional deficiency diseases.

As indicated in figure 1, one hundred and eighteen (118) respondents said that many students abused facilities such as their rooms of residents when they prepared meals in their hostels. This meant that students depended on electricity, which was paid for by the institution. There was also an implied problem of unhygienic conditions under which food was prepared, served and eaten that would results in health problems.

Figure 1 shows that one hundred and fifty (150) respondents said that the catering supplier at their institution delayed in serving meals. Because of that students were usually late for lectures, particularly after lunch.

Figure 1 also shows that two hundred and fifteen (215) respondents noted that they spent a lot of time looking around for food items for lunch or for supper, instead of focusing on the core-business of being educated and trained.

As shown in figure 1 two hundred and sixteen (216) respondents noted that left over foods from the previous day were stored, reheated and served again to students by the catering supplier, without skillfully making it more palatable. On one hand, scientifically, left over foods, if not well-stored might lead to food contamination caused by multiplication of bacteria and toxins if temperatures are not suitable to prohibit growth of bacteria, which leads to food contamination and poisoning. On the other hand reheated food items require a lot of skill to make them different from what they were

before, making them more appealing to the consumer.

Figure 1 shows that two hundred and eighteen (218) respondents indicated that usually food is served in unhygienic conditions. This reflected that some catering vendors lacked skills and knowledge of food hygiene. This might result in food borne diseases such as diarrhoea. This might also have scared away students and caused them to source food items elsewhere leaving the catering vendor with no business.

Figure 1 also shows that two hundred and forty (240) respondents indicated that students spent their money buying food items of minimal nutritive value such as freezers and buns which they could afford instead of buying healthy food. This reflects that there were dangers of students developing nutritional deficiency diseases,

Problems faced by students after outsourcing catering

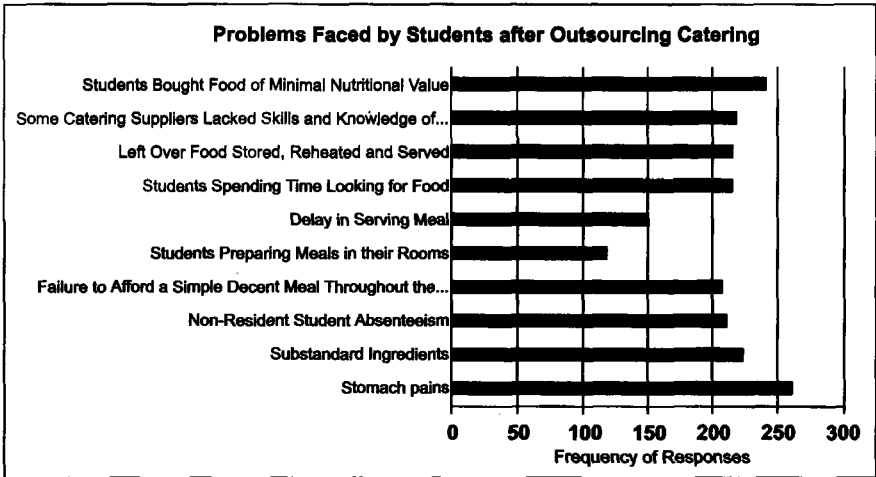


Figure 1

Presentation and Analysis of Data from the Principal and Dean of students

Data collected from these respondents was meant to determine the expertise of the catering company, whether there was consultation between the institutions and Government, terms of contract between the catering vendor and the institution, value created at institutions, and value added to the welfare of students after outsourcing the catering function.

Establishing if catering activity was outsourced to an expert at the institution or not.

All respondents said that tender selected companies and their expertise at

the time of sub contracting could not be doubted although standards deteriorated with time as the companies started making changes within their organizations. This shows that the service standards in these vendors and their service quality went down after outsourcing.

Consultation between the institution and Government before outsourcing

All four respondents said that the Government gave colleges the option to go through a tender consultation process that involved the Heads of institutions, but in Government institutions preference was given to the caterers previously employed by the Public Service Commission. This shows how each of the institutions had to select the best vendor that provided them with catering services.

Discussion on the terms of the contract between catering vendor and the institution

All four respondents indicated that they had a chance to discuss in detail the terms of the contract with the catering vendor and they agreed before outsourcing. However the vendors did not honour some of their obligations such as payment of electricity, coal and water bills. This implies that the two parties could go back to the contract document and iron out any problems related to clauses included in the contract.

Value created through outsourcing catering

The findings reflected that all three college principals and dean of students at university said that value was created only in terms of shedding off the non-core catering activity enabling the institutions to have more time on core-business. However they noted that there was lack of systematic quality management by the subcontracted companies hence students were complaining about quality of services at their institutions.

Value added to the welfare of students

All four respondents indicated that outsourcing was of value to students in that it created a spirit of self-reliance in managing their resources, they had to budget their money as they were no longer dependent on Government. They also said that generally it had not added value, but suffering to students as they could not afford descent meals and were surviving on buns, fruits, and food from certain unhygienic sources.

Issues of concern to institutions with regards catering service quality and students welfare

The dean of students and four principals indicated that dressing by company staff needed attention as the white uniforms and table materials which they were given when they were still Government employees were not being replaced even though there is need to do so as they were now torn and discolored, affecting their service quality.

Responses from Finance Officers dealing with catering at institutions studied

Data collected from these respondents was basically meant to establish;

Objectives of outsourcing catering, budgets and expenditure before and after outsourcing complement before and after outsourcing, whether or not the meals are subsidized for students and the cost benefit per student and institutions finances.

Objectives of Outsourcing

All respondents indicated that their objectives in outsourcing were to enable them to focus on the core business at their institutions. The respondents also indicated that their reasons for outsourcing included shedding off non-core activities costs and passing them on to the catering vendor. This reflects that to a great extent the objectives of outsourcing were achieved, shedding off the function of catering and focusing on the core business of education training and researching

Budgets for Students before and after Outsourcing

Costs per student averaged twenty Zimbabwe dollars (\$20000) per term (90) days per student before outsourcing. This shows that before outsourcing the government cushioned students, and subsidized for every students' meals. All the respondents said meals per student after outsourcing averaged one thousand two hundred Zimbabwe dollars (\$1200) per student per day that is for two plates without teas. This depicts that after services were outsourced students had to be responsible for all catering costs and this was quite expensive for them.

Staff Complement before and after Outsourcing

All four finance officers indicated that the institution employed a bigger number of catering staff than that employed by the catering vendor after outsourcing. All respondents said that after outsourcing catering they did not include it anymore on the payroll. This implies that payroll costs were cut considerably as staff compliment was significantly reduced.

Cost Benefit per Student per term after Outsourcing Catering

All four finance officers said the cost benefit per student after outsourcing catering in a term of ninety days was on the average sixty seven thousand Zimbabwe dollars (\$67000), ever since the Government stopped subsidizing for student meals. As for cost benefit per institution this depended on the enrolment figures at that institution.

Discussion

The results obtained covered the four areas addressed in the objectives, namely; the effects of outsourcing on the operational efficiency at institutions of higher learning, effects of outsourcing catering on the operational costs at institutions of higher learning, impacts of outsourcing on service quality in institutions of higher learning and establishing value created at institutions of higher learning through outsourcing catering. The findings were also analyzed to see how they agreed with or nullified the proposition. Throughout the discussion the argument for sustainable outsourcing of catering services was in many ways justified by the findings of the study.

Effects of outsourcing on the operational efficiency at institutions of higher learning

The study revealed that at least 50% of students who resided at the Institutions needed the catering services on daily basis during the hyper inflation period. Findings also revealed that students would have wanted to make a contribution with regards the decision to outsource. For successful and sustainable outsourcing, it is arguable in line with Rush , Kemper and Goldstein (1995) who note that several alternatives should be explored to ascertain how the best alternative meets campus needs as all recipients of a service need to be consulted before option to outsource a service is adopted. Involvement of stakeholders results in an informed decision to come up with a sustainable contract.

It was also established that students were late for lectures as there were delays in serving food by vendors particularly at lunch. Such waste of time had a negative impact on students' lecture attendance and use of library. An outsourcing strategy based purely on cost saving is dangerous and will lead to the service provider cutting corners which will inevitably impinge on the service. While the customer will always want to obtain the best in financial terms, it is worth remembering that the arrangement is an ongoing partnership and unrealistic cost cuts can undermine a service provider's ability to actually provide the service. (www.linklaters.com/Publications). In certain instances, lack of competencies within the company providing services can go unnoticed by the outsourcing institution. (Levy, 1995;

Russell and Taylor, 2008) The researcher argues that for sustainable outsourcing the vendor and the institution receiving services have to attend to issues pertaining to organizational cultural differences, supplier of services socializing staff to the core values that will enable them to provide service quality that matches the outsourcing Institution.

The findings revealed that students expressed discontent on the customer relations of the catering supplier. The researcher asserts that for sustainable outsourcing the service provider ought to have good customer relations, concurring with the fact that the key to stability in today's dynamic market place is forging long-term relationship with the customers (www.stylusinc.com/Common/ContactUs.php)

The findings also revealed that institutions had an option to select the supplier of their choice. This gave the institutions opportunity to come up with a contract that would address the service levels and other expectations concerning the supplier. In agreement Kallinikos (2009) observes that the change that is brought about by downsizing and outsourcing impacts on the psychological contract and the ultimate relationships.

The findings revealed that during that hyperinflationary period, students had total dependence on junk foods which were of no nutritive value. The chronic rise in cost of living reduced the quantity and availability of affordable food items. Absolute food shortages brought hardships on the communities such that even the nominally better off became food insecure. (CARE Zimbabwe, 2001. Community based food Security, Midlands Province: Baseline Report). Food items bought by students from the neighborhood might be unhygienic, and the researcher observed that the possibility of students contracting food borne diseases was great amongst the consumers of these food items. For sustainable outsourcing of catering service the outsourcing institutions had to consider the skills and knowledge of the supplier on food hygiene, safety, contamination and poisoning. Bailey (2010) observes that there are over two hundred types of bacteria, viruses and parasites that can cause food borne diseases. Reactions to these germs can range from mild gastric discomfort to death. The easiest way to prevent food borne illness is to properly handle, cook and serve foods.

The effects of outsourcing catering services on the operational costs at institutions of higher learning.

Findings revealed that the contributions students made to the institution for food were quite low before outsourcing catering as Government subsidized to catering, whereas after outsourcing students used more money on their food. It was uncovered that some students prepared food in hostels and this caused the institution to incur the additional electricity and water costs. In addition to that, the study revealed that the catering vendors did not honour

their obligations such as electricity, water and coal bills. Such costs fell onto the institutions shoulder. Kemper and Goldstein (1995) argue that both direct and indirect costs were part of the core issues that must be explored before when institutional management is deciding whether or not to outsource a function. It can be argued that that sustainable outsourcing would be possible as Jeffries (1996) suggests when the provider of a service function in higher education would enable the institution to remain competitive and improve service in the face of dwindling resources. In this instance the findings nullified the proposition that outsourcing non-core businesses reduces operational costs. To that end it can be argued that a sustainable contract is one that spells out all legal terms and should be made with a service provider who is in a position to honour his obligations for example, overhead costs. For sustainable outsourcing there was need for the institutions of higher learning and catering vendors to have legal contract documents and they could always revert to them to resolve problems of unfulfilled contract terms. The findings revealed that once the supplier of catering services delivery skills improved, students would need their service.

It was revealed that catering budgets before outsourcing were heavily subsidized by the Government. This shows that institutions shaded off costs after outsourcing, or budgets would have become unbearable as enrolment figures continued to rise. It also shows that each institution was relieved of all payroll costs and was then concentrating on education, training and research costs. Ender and Mooney (1994) observe that outsourcing to a contractor, can reduce a college or university's labour and benefits costs, provide accountability and provide predictable costs. This supports the proposition that outsourcing non-core business reduces operational costs of an organization. In addition there was value created in terms of spreading risk and costs to the catering vendor and students. However for sustainable outsourcing the researcher concurs with Schreiber (1994) who argues that the answer to whether or not to outsource is not only what is most cost efficient, but also what will provide the most consistency

The impacts of outsourcing on service quality in institutions of higher learning.

The findings revealed that students expressed discontent with the quality of service after catering services were outsourced. For sustainable outsourcing the researcher subscribes to (Kotabe and Murray, 1990) who argue that the service provider should deliver higher quality goods and services than what the organization used to have prior to outsourcing.

It was established that students bought foods from other sources close to their institution. The findings also revealed that before outsourcing, service quality was good, but it had since gone down. For sustainable outsourcing

the researcher concurs with Golgstein (1995) who advocates for mission and culture match on making a decision to outsource to ensure quality service delivery. Walker (1999) however, observes that some catering companies employ many unskilled workers with little or no training and often there is cultural diversity. The researcher argues that for sustainable outsourcing the supplier of services has to employ people to do the jobs that they are good at.

It was also uncovered that the skills level in the catering companies reflected that there was a training gap for the catering staff in service delivery and management. This contradicts the point of view of advocates of outsourcing cited by Jefferies (1996) who argue that the private sector provides service more efficiently and at a lower cost than the public sector.

The findings reflect that suppliers of catering services were recruited through tenders at these institutions. One would have expected the supplier of the catering services to deliver high quality service

The researcher established that uniforms for catering staff had become old and no longer presentable. Holloway and Plant (1996) consider that there is a relationship of services to service providers which they describe as 'inseparability' of some services from individuals who provide them. To that end, whatever the quality of the food and however attractive the décor, service is so much an integral part of the product that it would be unlikely to be purchased from a poorly dressed waiter.

Value creation at institutions of higher learning through outsourcing catering.

The findings revealed that objectives of outsourcing at the institutions studied were to shed off non-core activities and costs and to focus on core businesses. The findings revealed that this was made possible as catering operational expenses were passed on to the catering vendor. Colleges and Universities are now able to focus on the core business of education, training and research. However, for sustainable outsourcing, the researcher concurs with Schreiber, (1994) who argues that what best serves the institution that outsources is not only what is most cost efficient, but also what will provide the most consistency.

Conclusion

This article uncovered the successes and problems that were experienced after outsourcing services at intuitions of Higher Learning. The study established that sustainable outsourcing can be achieved. The contract has to be very carefully framed to avoid hidden pitfalls. The institutions should outsource to a supplier who is able to deliver higher quality goods and

services than they could provide prior to outsourcing. The supplier and institutions receiving services should attend to issues pertaining to organizational cultural differences. Complement for the vendor should be socialized to the core values of the outsourcing institution. The service provider ought to have good relations as the key to stability in today's dynamic market place is forging long-term relationship with the customers.

Recommendations

1. The outsourcing organization needs to make sure that it is ready to outsource because premature action may cause a lot of problems. A successful outsourcing relationship has clear objectives for the service quality and prizes have to be described, as they constitute the gut of the deal.
2. Institutions should ensure they have properly structured a legal contract agreement for outsourcing
3. For sustainable outsourcing the supplier of services has to employ people to do the job that they are good at.
4. Issues to do with the psychological contract between employer and employee have to be taken into consideration before outsourcing.
5. For sustainable contract, both direct and indirect costs should be explored before outsourcing.
6. For sustainable outsourcing in catering, the supplier should seriously consider skills and knowledge in food safety and bacterial control.

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