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# DETERMINING THE SERVICE PROVIDING METHOD SUITABLE FOR GENERAL SERVICE DELIVERY IN SHOPPING MALL FACILITIES IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA.

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**ABSTRACT:** *The vital function of facilities management is to support the organization's core business or activities for improved economic outcomes. Facilities management department is responsible for managing the infrastructure/facilities and property in order to achieve optimum productivity, constant quality improvement, cost reduction and risk minimization and ultimately improved value for money. To achieve these main purposes of facility management, it is important to determine the most suitable service providing method for general service delivery in shopping malls facilities in Anambra State. The aim of the study is to determine the service providing method suitable for general service delivery in shopping mall facilities in Anambra State. The descriptive survey method was adopted for the study; The study examined the procurement method for effective service delivery in shopping malls of Anambra State. The target population includes professional facility and property managers which are registered members of the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (NIESV) in the major urban Areas of Anambra State, that is Awka and Onitsha and Procurement Managers of standard shopping malls in Anambra State that is Roban Store and Onitsha mall (Shoprite). Group one (1) is made up of ninety five (95) registered Estate Surveyors and Valuers. Group two is made up of five Procurement managers in retail outlets in Roban Store and fifteen (15) procurement managers in selected outlet in Onitsha mall, making a total of one hundred and fifteen (115) respondents. However, 105 questionnaires were successfully retrieved and analysed. The study revealed that in-house method of service is most suitable in carrying out general services of a shopping mall and related facilities. Test of hypothesis revealed that both Estate Surveyors and Managers of Malls hold the same view that in-house method of service is most suitable in carrying out general services of a shopping mall and related facilities. This study concludes that for general services in shopping malls in Anambra State the best approach to be adopted is in-house method.*

**KEYWORDS:** Service Providing Method, Suitable, General Service Delivery, Shopping Mall Facilities, Anambra State.

## INTRODUCTION

Effective facilities management focuses on corporate asset management to add value to core business activities, provide enabling environment for offering superior service quality in support of business operations (Alexander, 1996). Facilities management also aims to sharpen the corporate image through facilities improvement, and enhancement of operational efficacy.

Due to cost, while making a choice, some organizations often chose outsourcing, where in-house could have delivered better value in the long run; or vice versa. Many investors of shopping mall are now finding out that they are not getting the level of facilities management service anticipated, and at cost originally sought. Retailers also feel that their service charge does not necessarily equate to level and quality expected. To guide against this, the decision to choose between both methods should be made having regard to the path that leads to long term best value for the organization. The problem of the study is to establish which method (in-house or out-source) is suitable for general service delivery of facilities within the shopping malls in Anambra State.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Concept of Value and Service Delivery

Value by its ordinary definition particularly in basic economics is the utility or satisfaction which a good or service offers. In real estate profession, value means the worth of an interest in land and building or claim on chattels accessed. Akin and Brooks (2005) maintain that the concept of value for money is often associated with cost reduction. Whereas cost is easier to measure, value for money is concerned with quality of a service and the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which it is delivered. Akin and Brook argued that lowest price should not be the sole factor in deciding which tender to accept and frown at tenders accepted on the basis of price alone. Quality should play an important part in any evaluation, if best value is to be derived. Akin and Brooks (2005) further emphasize that cost savings strongly correlated to value, where both aspects cannot be segregated. Therefore, it is crucial for organizations to demonstrate what they are getting for their money and should not assume less today is proof of better value for money.

However, in most of the cases the achievement of best value is demonstrated by acceptance of the lowest tender price in a competition where all other criteria (quality, performance, terms and conditions) are equal. Best value can also be achieved through collaborative arrangements with suppliers and services provider. Facilities management aims to improve the efficacy of the organization's operations. It focuses on the capability and quality of its working atmosphere to support core activities and at significant value addition through effective planning and management. Generally, value entails a strong relationship amid cost or price and quality or performance (Akin and Brooks 2005). Most organization looks forward to attain best value decision or best value for money for their business or support services. "Best value decision'' or "best value for money'' extends the concept of value for money to imply a need to strive continually for something superior at the lowest practicable cost.

In order to achieve ''Best value decision", there are two key factors that need to be taken into account; namely the cost or price and the quality or performance (Akin and Brooks, 2005).


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Both key factors are central in deciding whether to retain services in- house or out-source them. Notably, decision should support the choice of approach and service provision that contributes best value for money; rather than solely rely on the lowest cost. This lends credence to the observations of (Roberts, 2001) that value addition in facility management is seen as an optimization process rather than only cost cutting. It is of the essence to measure the performance of the service provided against the cost and quality. This served to reinforce the views of (Vorkuka and Fliedner, 1995) that a balance between financial and non-financial measures is enviable in the pursuit of "best value decision".

**General Service Function of Facility Management**

For custodial, housekeeping, moving recycling and pest control services. This department supplies custodial, housekeeping, moving, setup, pest control, recycling services and maintaining high quality of services.

**Criteria for Selection of Outsourcing or In-House Facilities Management Method for General Service Function**

Facilities management is a very wide field and consequently a continually changing one (Barrett, 1995). In practice, facilities management can cover a wide range of services including the real estate management, financial management, change management, human resources management, health and safety and contract management, in addition to building maintenance, domestic services (such as cleaning and security) and utilities supplies (Atkin and Brooks, (2005). This lends credence to the views expressed by Tranfield and Akhlagi (1995) that in the context of the whole organization, the role of facilities management has gradually evolved from merely helping the organization to survive, to acting and to enhance its potential to prosper in a volatile commercial climate. It then follows that the challenges for facilities manager is indeed the same challenge facing the organization. Atkin and Brooks (2005), emphasize that these extensive facilities management functions may be successfully performed or provided either by in-house or out-sourcing approach, depending on the priority of the activities or services of an organization. Two possible options exist in the decision to outsource or not to outsource: The organization decides to retain or out-source the services on the whole basis. The organization out-sources part of the services and retains certain services in-house (particularly if the facilities management function is part of organizational strategic management process).

Atkin (2003) observes that some organizations operate what might be described as a mixed economy – retaining some services in-house whilst contracting out others. Barrett (1995) re-echoed this observation by stating that some organizations favour a total in-house option, while others literally contract out every service possible; yet others use a combination of both. The decision should be made having regard to the path that leads to long term best value for the organization. This is achieved by taking full account of the implications, especially the true cost of all options (Atkin and Brooks, 2005). Consequently, Atkin (2003) envisage that there will be advantages or disadvantages to providing services either in-house or by outsourcing. Nevertheless, there are no hard and fast rules concerning what should be kept in-house and what should be contracted out (Barrett, 1995). This agrees with Atkin's (2003) argument that there is no general rule in this regards, rather a need to define the thinking, practice and procedures that will lead to best value for the organization.


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### Out-sourcing Method

Outsourcing can be seen as a service commissioned from an external supply organization, usually under the terms of a formal contractual agreement (Barret and Baldry, 2003). There may be several of these contractual relationships operating in parallel for a range of services from a variety of suppliers. Outsourcing can therefore be seen as a process where a user employs a separate company (the supplier) under a contract to perform a function which had previously been carried out in- house and transfers to the supplier assets including people and management responsibility. Atkin (2003) corroborates this definition by adding that outsourcing is the placing of the facilities management services required by an organization into the hands of external service providers.

Lankford and Parsa (1999) described outsourcing as the procurement of products and services from sources that are external to the organization. Outsourcing deals with the issue where certain non-core activities can be alienated and given to another organization with the purpose to deliver the services on the original organization’s behalf (Collings, 2007). Outsourcing may be viewed as not just from the outcome of a costing exercise, it also has strategic dimension as the organization attempts to find the right size to fit new environments (Rothery and Robertson 1995).

Welch and Raganath (1992) cautioned that while cost is always important in any business decision, managers should consider strategic and technological issues in conjunction with the cost – driven decision to outsource. Cost efficiency remains a primary explanation for the development of outsourcing where organizations evaluate outsourcing to determine if current operating costs can be reduced as well as access new resources such as technical expertise (Fill and Visser 2000).

The decision to outsource can be made subjectively or objectively (Atkin and Brooks 2002). Often times the decision to outsource is vitally derived from the fact that it is able to support functions that can be completed faster where better quality can be guaranteed at cheaper and reasonable cost. McCarthy (1996) identified several primary reasons why a firm may consider outsourcing, they are: Outsourcing allows companies to refocus their resources on their core business, Outsourcing lets companies re-examine their benefit plans, makes them more efficient and saves time and money while improving efficiencies, Companies outsource to improve the benefit plan service level to their employees by making the information more consistent and more available, To reduce costs over the longer term.

Several findings point to the criteria that drive outsourcing decisions. Winkleman, Dole, Pinkard and Mollloy (1993) identified two basic drivers behind the growth of outsourcing: cost reduction and a strategic shift in the way organizations are managing their business.

Behara (1995) emphasize the factors that need to be considered in outsourcing decision in the context of a specific firm’s situation as follows: impact of company’s competitiveness, identifying services to be outsourced, the number of suppliers to be used, ability to return to in house operations if required, supplier reliability and service quality, coordinating with the supplier and evaluating performance, flexibility in the products offered by the supplier, providing the latest or advanced technology and expertise.


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**Facilities Management Functions Suitable for Outsourcing**

The key to deciding what to outsource rests with those elements that differentiate the organization, especially in the areas of value and quality (Fill and Visser, 2000). Inevitably, Fill and Visser noted that while management must own those operations that define a company's core business and its core business process, other functional areas that are non-core should be considered potential candidates for outsourcing. The authors also argue that by outsourcing non-critical functions, a company can leverage its financial resources, share its financial risk and allow management to concentrate more fully on core business activities. Mudrak (2004) corroborate this by observing that outsourcing all the non-core activities enables the management of client organization to focus on core business.

Blumberg (1998) lists the viable circumstances for which the facilities management functions are suitable for outsourcing:

i. Customers are concerned with the outcome of the functions performed and pay little attention to the process.

ii. Capabilities are readily available in the mass market and proximity or access to the customer is not an issue.

iii. The technology to perform the function is very stable.

iv. World class performance is a critical success factor.

v. External vendors are clearly more competent.

vi. Significant capital and resources are required to improve any performance gap.

vii. Organization have plans to harvest or exit the business in the near future.

**Advantages and Disadvantages of Outsourcing**

The decision to outsource leads to both advantages and disadvantages. Gilley and Rasheed (2000) observed that sole reliance on outsourcing is not usually a viable competitive strategy. On the positive side, outsourcing creates competitive advantage when products or services are produced more effectively and efficiently by outside suppliers. This lends credence to the observations of Gilley and Rasheed (2000) that organizations are increasingly turning to outsourcing in an attempt to enhance their competitiveness. They are of the opinion that firms that outsource may achieve long-run advantages compared to firms relying on internal production, switch suppliers as new and more cost effective technologies become available.

Kotabe and Murray (1990) observed that outsourcing promotes competition among outside suppliers, thereby ensuring availability of higher quality goods and services in the future. Outsourcing also spread risk. This is because by using outside suppliers for products or services, an outsourcer is able to make advantage of emerging technology without investing significant amounts of capital in that technology. Hence the outsourcer is able to switch suppliers when market conditions demand. On the negative side of outsourcing, reliance on outside suppliers is likely to lead to a loss of overall market performance.


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### In-house Method

In-house approach is a " service that is provided by a dedicated resource directly employed by the client organization, where monitoring and control of the performance is normally conducted under the terms of conventional employer/employee relationship, although internal service-level agreement may be employed as regulating mechanism" (Barret and Baldry, 2003). An in-house approach remains to deal internally with product or services that require skill and knowledge in order to serve customers better.

### Advantages and Disadvantages of In –House Method.

Wise (2007) provides insight to the benefits of in-house provisions of facilities management functions, according to him people who are in-house own their work. In-house employee usually will perform better than out-soured employee who makes decisions based on how they will affect their own employers, not for the people for whom they are working by proxy.

Result of long term financial analysis usually supports in-house rather than out-sourcing option.In-house option has been found to result to improved employee as well as customer satisfaction the same time. In-house offers the company the opportunity to grow people instead of hiring from outside, and so provide career prospects that reduces staff turnover.

Outsourcing could enable the organization to pick the best service provider in terms of experience, quality, speed and efficiency; however, these may be quick fixes which are not sustainable in the long run. Atkin and brooks (2005) also provided an insight on the disadvantages of in-house provision of facilities management functions:-

a. poorly defined scope will lead almost inevitably, to problems in the management of the service with higher supervision cost and lowering of customer satisfaction, consultation with all stakeholders is essential.

b. Without delineation of roles and responsibilities, it can be difficult to measure the performance of in-house personnel.

c. Given that the organization's management may be looking periodically at the market for external service provision, it makes sense for the in-house team to operate in the business-like way so that it can compete fairly if the need arises.

d. Most of the organizations manage to do this, but the weakness is in maintaining a consistent level over time.

e. One of the biggest threats to the in-house team's success is from complacency, which is easily noticed by customers.

Bernard Williams Associates (1999), notes that many in-house set-ups may be uncompetitive in financial and performance terms. The author further observes that cost, quality, motivation, flexibility and availability of skills are all practical reasons why out-source may work better for the core business advantages of the organization than in-sourcing.


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## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey method was adopted for the study; The study is examined the procurement method for effective service delivery in shopping malls of Anambra State, The target population includes professional facility and property managers which are registered members of the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (NIESV) in the major urban Areas of Anambra State, that is Awka and Onitsha and Procurement Managers of standard shopping malls in Anambra State that is Roban Store and Onitsha mall (Shoprite). Group one (1) is made up of ninety five (95) registered Estate Surveyors and Valuers. Group two is made up of five Procurement managers in retail outlets in Roban Store and fifteen (15) procurement managers in selected outlet in Onitsha mall making a total of one hundred and fifteen (115) respondents. However, 105 questionnaires were successfully retrieved and analysed. The data were presented in tables. The research questions were analysed using mean and standard deviation while the hypothesis was tested using T- test as it compares means two sets of data, tests the difference between the means of two group and compares distinct samples.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Distribution and Retrieval of Questionnaires

**Table 1: Distribution and Return of Questionnaires**

| Respondents | No. Distributed | Percentage (%) | No. Retrieved | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Estate Surveyors | 95 | 83 | 85 | 81 |
| Managers | 20 | 17 | 20 | 19 |
| Total | 115 | 100 | 105 | 100 |

Table 1 shows that a total of 115 questionnaires were distributed to various categories of the respondents under investigation as follows; Estate Surveyors, 95 (83%) and Mall managers, 20 (17%). However, only 105 questionnaires were retrieved. Therefore, the researcher worked with the 105 correctly filled questionnaires which are composed of Estate Surveyors, 85 (81%) and Mall managers, 20 (19%).

**Table 2: Demographic Features (Specialization) of the respondents**

| Area of Special1zation of Respondents | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Property manager | 20 | 19 |
| Property valuation | - | - |
| Property consultancy | 15 | 14.3 |
| Facilities management | 40 | 38.1 |
| Property development | 5 | 4.8 |
| Plant and machinery valuation | - | - |
| Financial analysis | - | - |
| Real estate leasing | 5 | 4.8 |
| Project management | 10 | 9.5 |
| Others | 10 | 9.5 |
| Total | 105 | 100 |


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Table 2 shows the area of specialization of the respondents. This indicates that the respondents were specialized as follows; property management 20 (19%), property consultancy 15 (14.3%), facilities management 40 (38.1%), property development and real estate leasing 5(4.8%) each, project management and others 10 (9.5%) each, while property valuation, plant and machinery valuation and financial analysis each indicates 0 responses.

**Determining the Service Providing Method Generally Suitable in Functions of Shopping Mall Facilities**

**Table 3: Determination of the General Suitability of In-House Service Providing Method in Functions of Shopping Malls**

| Item | SD | D | UD | A | SA | Total | Mean | Standard Deviation (SD) | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| House keeping | 22 | 10 | - | 51 | 22 | 105 | 3.35 | 1.45 | S |
| Moving recycling services | 22 | 10 | 11 | 51 | 11 | 105 | 3.18 | 1.34 | S |
| Pest control | 22 | 31 | - | 31 | 21 | 105 | 2.98 | 1.49 | S |
| Maintaining high quality of services | 23 | 10 | - | 61 | 11 | 105 | 3.26 | 1.38 | S |
| Procurement of goods for sales | 33 | 10 | - | 30 | 32 | 105 | 3.17 | 1.68 | S |
| Speed of services including emergency response | 33 | 10 | 10 | 31 | 21 | 105 | 2.97 | 1.56 | S |
| Cost efficiency and quality of services | 25 | 18 | 10 | 32 | 20 | 105 | 3.04 | 1.48 | S |
| Offer reorganization or relocation associated with addition or loss of staff, loss or gain of leased space, installation of new equipment, reorganization of functional units or changes in work progress | 20 | 23 | 10 | 37 | 25 | 105 | 3.10 | 1.44 | S |

S = Suitable,   NS = Not Suitable.

In Table 3, In the rating, any criteria with mean less than 2.0 indicates that out-sourcing of service method is not suitable in that situation, while above 2.0 indicates that in-house method of service is suitable. therefore all the eight (8) criteria revealed that application of in-house method in general services is most suitable. One criterion is most suitable with the mean of 3.35. This shows that in-house method of service is most suitable in carrying out general services of a shopping mall and related facilities.


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**Test of Research Hypothesis**

**$H_0$:** There is no significant difference in the opinion of Estate Surveyors and Mall Managers on the suitability of in-house and out-source procurement methods to general service management of facilities.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of the Suitability of In-House and Out-Source Procurement Methods to General Service Management of Facilities.**

| Respondents | No. of Respondents | Mean | Standard Deviation | Standard Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Estate Surveyors | 85 | 3.1885 | 1.11380 | 0.12081 |
| Managers | 20 | 2.9125 | 1.20587 | 0.26964 |

In Table 4, it is indicated that 85 Estate Surveyors were used for the investigation and their responses had a mean of 3.1885 and a Standard Deviation of 1.11380, while for the 20 Mall Managers assessed, their responses had a mean of 2.9125 and Standard Deviation of 1.20587.

**Table 5: Independent T-Test Analysis of the Suitability of In-House and Out-Source Method to General Service Management of Facilities.**

| | F | Sig. | T | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Equal Variance Assumed** | 0.015 | 0.903 | 0.981 | 103 | 0.329 |

In Table 5, the computed t values of 0.981 (df 103) has a significance value of 0.329 for 2-tailed test. It is statistically not significant at 0.05 level ($p > 0.05$).

This implies that there is no significant difference in the Estate Surveyors and Managers rating of the suitability of in-house and out-source method of procurement to general service management of facilities. This means that both the Estate Surveyors and Managers hold the same view that in-house method of service is most suitable in carrying out general services of a shopping mall and related facilities.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study revealed that in-house method of service is most suitable in carrying out general services of a shopping mall and related facilities. From the test of hypothesis it is revealed that both Estate Surveyors and Managers of Malls hold the same view that in-house method of service is most suitable in carrying out general services of a shopping mall and related facilities

## Conclusion

This study aimed at determining the service providing method suitable for general service delivery in shopping mall facilities in Anambra State. The study will be beneficial to current



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and prospective investors who intends to invest in shopping malls in making good decisions as to the most suitable general service delivery method for shopping malls in Anambra state. Having considered and evaluated different service providing methods, the study is of the conclusion that in-house method is the most suitable approach for general service delivery in shopping mall facilities in Anambra State.

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