

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION



FACULTY OF ECONOMICS

**A Study of the Impact of Outsourcing Transportation Services on Operational
Performance during Examination Materials Distribution. A case of Zimbabwe
School Examinations Council.**

By

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R226158B

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN PURCHASING
AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT OF BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF
SCIENCE EDUCATION.**

NOVEMBER 2023

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MASTERS TITLE : Masters in Purchasing and Supply Chain Management

YEAR GRANTED : 2023

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband Tonderai Mudzinganyama, whose continuous support has enabled me to get this far. I am grateful to God.

ABSTRACT

Outsourcing as a strategic tool has attracted much attention in recent years. Many organizations chose outsourcing as a tool of competitive advantage. Outsourcing is a complex process and improper strategy pathway can create formidable barriers against firm performance. Employing the core competency theory, this Study systematically investigates the firm outsourcing strategy design, operation model and impact on operation performance. It also makes a comprehensive analysis on the relationship between core competency and outsourcing. As such, this study tried to ascertain the significant effects of outsourcing strategies on the organizational performance of the Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council in regards cost reduction, customer relationship and operational performance. A survey of conveniently chosen 34 Schools was conducted in the city of Harare, Zimbabwe. The informants for schools were competent drivers and headmasters. A factorial MANOVA were conducted. The study indicated statistically significant main effects and interaction effects for all the factors and concluded that all the indicators of the organizational performance are relational in all variables. The study found that outsourcing of transport services at The Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council has the ability to proffer quality services, improved delivery time and reduce operational costs. Also the study discovered that outsourcing of certain technical aspects of business that has to do with knowledge and professionalism enhance customers' relationship. The study recommends that The Zimbabwe Schools Examination should sustain business relationships that would assists in transaction negotiation with outsourcing vendors to boost the operational performance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Almighty God for making this journey possible. I would also like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr. P Mukucha for his unwavering support on this dissertation. Special mention goes to my family and friends for the support since day one. May God bless you abundantly.

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UNIT ONE

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, general objective of the study, specific objectives, research questions (hypotheses), scope of the study, and significance of the study. Outsourcing is the process whereby firms purchase products and services from other companies than to make the products or perform the services internally (Bearden, 2007). Some companies believe that this is more cost effective, as it allows them to concentrate on their core competencies and to purchase the products or services from expert companies than to produce in-house.

1.1 Background of the study

ZIMSEC was established in 1995 with an acting director. Following their removal from public service, former employees of the Examinations Branch joined ZIMSEC in 1996. Authorities have since hired outside transportation companies to distribute exam papers in the wake of all the changes. The requirement to assess how an outsourcing strategy for transport services affects operational performance using a case study of The Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council is what spurred this study. Ordinary and Advanced Level exams were to be held locally, according to a 1983 cabinet decision in Zimbabwe. The first locally administered Ordinary level exams were administered in 1990.

Thus far, this has presented notable operational difficulties for the Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council. The outsourcing agreement, which was discussed on a number of forums, included unacceptable product lead times that were reduced by at least 50%, inflexibility, and system

incompatibility. Challenges were not faced by the organization in the previous setup. Distribution of exam papers has been wildly uneven, with only 60% of papers distributed. The organization's level of confidence also fell, falling from 88% to 58%. The evaluation of transport service outsourcing as a strategic instrument and operational performance in obtaining literature is the driving force behind this study.

Many businesses choose to outsource in the hopes of reaping financial rewards. Improved performance can result from outsourcing and include things like better-quality products, faster cycle times, more productivity, bigger revenues, etc. Along with many other things, it might also entail reducing asset investment, increasing risk management, and concentrating more on your strengths (Greaver, 1999). According to a Price Waterhouse Coopers (1999) survey, the majority of organizations outsource largely for short-term, cost-saving purposes. Customers can take advantage of supplier cost benefits such economies of scale, experience, and location by outsourcing (McIvor, 2005). In the book publishing industry nowadays, outsourcing encompasses networks including new partners in addition to agreements with established trading partners.

1.2 Problem Statement

The delivery of examination papers to schools, particularly those in remote areas, presents significant issues for the Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council. Transport service providers who were already in the transportation business would be able to meet international standards, the idea of outsourcing transport services was initially seen as a noble one. However, this has not translated into an operational benefit. The outsourcing agreement has faltered on a number of fronts, including poor product lead times that have decreased by at least 50%, inflexibility, and system incompatibility. The organization never had any problems with distribution or examination leaks when using the previous method. Examinee privacy has fluctuated, reaching 60%. Even though it is the only examination council, the organization has suffered a 34% decline as more schools are switching to Cambridge. Even if the company used to offer a nice service, there have been significant client (school) defections. Private school enrolment fell to 0%. The organization has suffered greatly from poor operational performance, which could cause several international colleges to refuse to accept the degree.

1.3 Scope of the study

Using the Zimbabwe Examination Council as a case study, this study examines how the outsourcing strategy affects operational performance. The content scope included operational performance and outsourced services as the dependent variable and outsourcing as the independent variable. September to October of 2023 is the study time for the Grade 7 Examinations. The researcher has enough time throughout this timeframe to assess the effects of the factors' interactions. Customers (schools and colleges), students, and staff members of the Zimbabwe School Examination Council (management and operation staff) make up the study's population.

1.4 Aims

In the area of public examinations, where the focus organization is the Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council, the goal of this study is to critically assess the outsourcing restrictions and guidelines. The study's objectives are to investigate the organization's performance in outsourcing and develop a competitive business plan for the Examination Council.

1.5 Research Objectives

The study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To establish the impact of outsourcing transportation services on operational cost.
2. To find out how outsourcing of transportation services improve quality of deliveries at Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council.
3. To establish whether outsourcing of transportation services yield timely deliveries of the examination materials at The Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council.

1.6 Purpose of the study

The main goal this study is to show the relationship between outsourcing and operational performance. The study sought to provide a comprehensive idea regarding the organisation outsourcing transport activities to gain more operational advantage. The underpinning principle in the study was to discover the main aim and objectives of outsourcing and how the examination board can leverage on these.

1.7 Statement of hypotheses

H₁ Outsourcing transportation services reduce operational cost during the distributing the examination materials at The Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council

H₂ Outsourcing of transportation services improve service quality during distributing of the examination materials at Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council

H₃ Outsourcing of transportation services yield timely deliveries during distribution of the examination materials at The Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council.

1.8 Significance of the study

✓ **To the Researcher**

The study findings will help to inform the on different ways of how outsourcing transport services can be made relevant to operational performance.

✓ **The Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council**

The study findings will also help the senior management, the advisory committee, finance committee and the distribution department by availing them with information that they may use to make decisions that are more informed, as far as outsourcing transport services is concerned.

✓ **To other researchers**

✓ Finally, the findings will be of great use to the academia, especially those who may wish to carry out further research on outsourcing transport service and operational performance. It may build on the existing body of literature and knowledge.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The assumptions are concerned with availability of data for this study. The researcher assumes that participants would willingly get involved in the study and would give genuine responses. Their

cooperation is assumed to be very high and encouraging as these are the key pillars for the successful implementation for these studies.

1.10 Delimitations

The study was delimited to the evaluation of the impact of outsourcing transportation services during the distribution of examination materials at ZIMSEC. The Study focuses on the operations at the Head Office in Harare, Zimbabwe. Operation performance is only considered in reference to the effective distribution of examination materials in Zimbabwe.

1.11 Limitations of the study

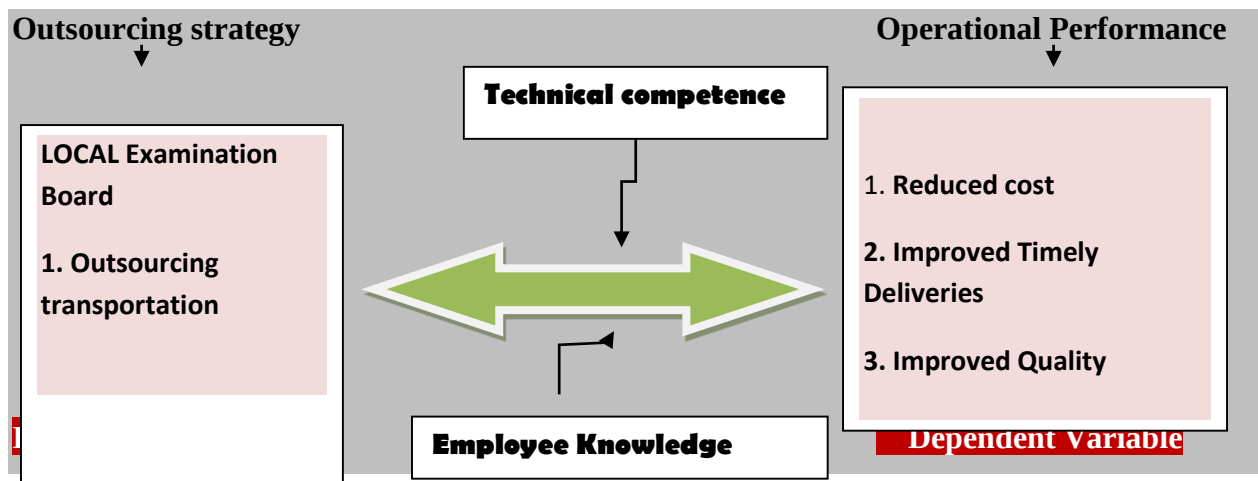
The study would have looked into the implementation of public procurement in Zimbabwe's public sector so as to get a conclusive but due to time limitations with regards to the scope of the study timelines; it was focused on the head office. Financial resources were also a limitation as the student couldn't manage to get a sponsorship. Reliance was on personal funds and financial support from family and friends. Over and above these limitations, the student, the study was considered true reflections of the how operational efficiency can be enhanced through outsourcing of transport services at ZIMSEC.

1.12 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is as follows:-

Organisations outsource to achieve different objectives such as reduced costs, increased productivity, flexibility, better quality product etc.

Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework



Source: Adapted and modified from Ogola (2013)

1.10 Definition of Key terms.

Outsourcing: Outsourcing is the process by which an organization contracts with another individual or company to get some of its work done. Outsourcing simply means to transfer work responsibilities and decision rights to someone outside the business. Outsourcing refers to a company that contracts with another company to provide services that might otherwise be performed by in – house employees.

Operational Performance: operational performance comprises the actual output or results of an organisation as measured against its intended outputs (or goals and objectives).

Competitive advantage: refers to a position of enduring superiority over competitors; often referred as the sustainable high ground arising from the exploitation of distinct capabilities and competencies by an organization.

1.11 Organization and Layout of the study

This research project followed the following format:

The study is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 focuses on statement of the problem together with the research objectives, hypothesis and the significance of the study.

Chapter 2 tackles review of literature where the theoretical framework, the conceptual framework and empirical studies as well as gap analysis is addressed.

Chapter 3 looks into the research methodology which clarified the steps followed by the researcher in carrying out the study and giving justifications as to why each taken step was considered the most ideal for the study. It covered things like the research philosophy used, the research design, the data collection instruments, data analysis among many other issues.

Chapter 4 focuses on the presentation and analysis of results and this involves the use of SPSS to analyse data. Tables, charts and graphs were used in the presentation of results. The chapter also included a number of statistical tests, the testing of hypothesis and the validation of some claims through results.

Chapter 5 dwells much on the discussion of the results in which the researcher was making sense out of the results and making reference to what other study have concluded as far as business model innovation and competitive advantage are concerned. This is the last chapter and it touched on the conclusions and recommendations that the researcher made as far as the study is concerned. The conclusions and recommendations are made per each objective and areas of further study are also highlighted as a way of showing some insights which are important but that were not covered in this study.

1.12 Chapter Summary.

This chapter laid out the foundation of the research by highlighting the background to the study, which showed the gap that motivated the researcher to undertake the study. The research discussed the purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitations encountered by the researcher during the study. Research questions and objectives have been presented. The following chapter presents a review of related literature.

UNIT TWO

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter will dwell on the theoretical framework, empirical evidence ,gap analysis and chapter summary providing much insights on the subject :outsourcing of transportation services and the literature that is available to help expose the significance of the study. This chapter focuses on literature review for outsourcing of logistics activities and assess its impact on the service performance of the organization .

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Theory of assets

A general theory of assets should explain how they are created, how long they last, and how they are retired. In it, the term "asset" should be defined broadly enough to include both current and future company-useful features as well as those significant to the many departments of business administration, economics, and industrial engineering. According to the American Accounting Association's theoretical definition, assets are "aggregates of service-potentials available for or advantageous to anticipated operations; they are economic resources dedicated to business purposes within a specific accounting entity." Although the general asset theory goes beyond what this definition suggests, it still satisfies the requirement and is thus consistent with this aspect of accounting theory.

The monetary equivalent of an asset's service potential is that asset's value. Conceptually, this is the total of the future market prices of all to be derived service streams, discounted to their current value by probability and interest components. However, this idea of value is an abstraction with only a few real-world applications for quantification. As a result, other, more practical methodologies are frequently used to measure assets. According to IASB (2013) an asset is a resource that an organization controls as a result of earlier activities and from which it anticipates future financial gains.

2.2.2 Stakeholder theory

Stakeholder theory has been described in a variety of ways, including as a perspective, a collection of thoughts, phrases, and metaphors connected to the overriding goal of maximizing stakeholder value. Stakeholder theory researchers and practitioners place an emphasis on the "jointness" of interests that underpins all corporate value generation. According to Freeman (2009, p. 65), taking stakeholder interests into account while making managerial decisions enables "better consequences for all stakeholders since it recognizes that stakeholder interests are joint. The other stakeholders will either stop supporting that stakeholder or attempt to establish another network of stakeholder value creation if that stakeholder pursues its interests at the expense of the others.

The strategic organizational planning, systems theory, corporate social responsibility, and organizational theory subfields of organization management study all contributed to the development of the stakeholder theory. The evolution of the stakeholder concept is explored by Strand and Freeman (2015), with a focus on the Scandinavian contribution to early theory development. In his 1964 book "Företagsdemokrati och Företagsorganisation," Rehnman introduced the term stakeholder (a direct translation of the Swedish term "intressent"). The book introduced a number of novel ideas, such as the first published stakeholder map and several important ideas in stakeholder thinking, such as 1) jointness of interests, 2) cooperative strategic posture, and 3) rejection of a limited economic view of the organization, among others.

2.2.3 Institutional theory

Institutional theory is a theory that focuses on the more complex and durable facets of social structure and is used in sociology and organizational studies. It views the procedures by which structures, such as plans, regulations, customs, and routines, come to be formed as the supreme standards for social conduct.

Institutional arguments are based on "institutions that structure action," as opposed to "aggregations of individual action" or "patterned interaction games between individuals" (Clemens and Cook 1999: 442). The interests and political engagement of actors are constrained or defined by institutions, which are emergent, "higher-order" elements above the individual level, and which can accomplish these regularities "without requiring repeated collective mobilization or authoritative intervention" (Jepperson 1991: 145). Institutions are widely defined by all three types of institutionalists.

2.2.4 Transaction cost theory

According to Benkler (2006) and Williamson (1985), Ronald Coase is usually considered as the founder of transaction cost theory. Coase tried to understand "why a firm emerges at all in a specialized exchange economy" in his key work, "The Nature of the Firm," which was published in the American Economic Review in 1937 (Coase 1937, p. 390). Although firms were recognized as an alternative form of economic organization at the time, economists did not yet have a fully developed theory to explain why they existed. Coase therefore set out to address this issue by creating a theoretical work that clarified the nature of firms.

According to the transaction cost theory (Williamson 1979, 1986), the ideal organizational structure is one that maximizes economic efficiency while minimizes exchange costs. According to the hypothesis, there are coordination costs associated with tracking, coordinating, and administering transactions for each type of transaction. According to Douglass North, transaction costs are determined by four factors: "measurement", "enforcement", "ideological attitudes and perceptions", and "the size of the market". Measurement is the process of determining the total cost of the product or service being exchanged.

Coase (1937) asserted that "The main reason why it would seem to be profitable to establish a firm would seem to be that there is a cost of using the price mechanism" (p. 390), after rejecting a number of current economic arguments (such as technological inseparability). The fundamental premise of Coase's work was that market transactions involve a set of expenses that may be minimized if they take place within a corporation. As a result, his conception of transaction costs is fundamentally comparative.

2.2.5 Resource dependency theory

The corporation is characterized by resource dependence theory (RDT) as an open system that is dependent on external environment contingencies (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). RDT claims that businesses collaborate with other parties to reduce their reliance on essential resources. It is suggested that businesses without particular resources will collaborate with other businesses in an effort to acquire them (Ulrich & Barney, 1984). In conclusion, RDT describes how organizational activities, network exchanges, and outcomes relate to dependence on resources outside the organization (Aldrich & Pfeffer, 1976; Emerson, 1962; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). The idea of power, or having control over important resources, is central to these acts (Ulrich & Barney, 1984). Organizations work to weaken others' influence over them while frequently striving to strengthen their own. Managers can still take action to lessen environmental reliance and uncertainty despite being constrained by external constraints (Hillman, Withers, & Collins, 2009).

In actuality, the supply chain involves a variety of organisations with various degrees of influence and dependence. Organisations frequently share information with their chain partners, and exchanging data, knowledge, or analysis can turn into a valuable resource depending on which side of the reliance spectrum an organisation occupies (Ketchen & Hult, 2007). According to Waller and Fawcett (2013), a firm's power may improve if it is able to apply BDA to that information.

2.2.1 Outsourcing and Operational Costs

The objective of transportation is to link all pick-up and deliver-to points within the response time requirements of the customer service policy and the limitations of the transportation infrastructure at the lowest possible cost. One of the practices used to achieve this efficiency was the batching of

orders for release to the warehouse floor and the holding of outbound trucks to achieve maximum cube utilization. These practices did yield a low picking and transportation cost (Edward H Frazelle, 2002).

Outsourcing involves performing a function or process such as manufacturing operation and other value-additions activities with reliance on external sources, a third-party or supplier, so as to attain business level benefits (Rushton e tal, 2000) According to Weele (2010) outsourcing describes a company that divests itself of the resources to fulfil a particular activity to another company, to focus more on its own competence. Most companies view outsourcing as a means of reducing operational cost. They are skills and systems that a company does at best in world levels and through which a company creates uniquely high value for customers (Prahalad & Hamel, 2014). These are activities that organizations achieves their competitive advantage, they may be referred as core competencies or primary activities Core activities are subject to outsourcing and organizations believe that they lack required levels of competencies in order to perform them in house hence not cost effective to the organization. According to British governments (1993) market test programme, cited by Fallington, B. and Lysons, K. (2006) that outsourced activities are those that are: resource intensive especially with high labour and capital intensive, relatively discrete, required specialist competences, subject to rapidly changing technology which requires expensive capital investment and quickly changing markets.

Outsourcing is viewed mainly as a way of reducing operational costs. Operational costs may be defined as all the costs associated with effort, time incurred when searching supply sources, formulating, evaluating, monitoring and enforcement of the contract between buying and supplying organizations. Ang & Straub (1998) observed that “transaction cost economics extends the neoclassical economic perspective of the firm by recognizing the significance of transaction costs in any market exchange.” There are three key concepts of transaction costs theory which was identified by Coase and Williamson cited by Lysons and Farrington, (2012) that transaction costs include: search and bargain costs, bargaining and decisions costs and policing and enforcements costs. Therefore organization used outsourcing as the means to overcome the operational costs as well as to the Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council Strategic outsourcing resulted in an essential combination of cost and risk reduction (Christopher, 2011). This is due to the external

suppliers taking on investments and development risks that the outsourcer does not. Due to the pooling effect and economies of scale, the supplier lowers costs for all of its clients by spreading these risks among numerous clients. Additionally, one of the crucial new tools and advantages of outsourcing today is risk management in and of itself (Lambert, Emmelhainz and Gardner, 2014). In certain circumstances, a business may discover that the depth of the relationship necessary to absorb a strategic supplier's strong technical capabilities may increase coordination costs or increase the risk of unintended technology leakage (Kotabe, 2014). Therefore, such businesses can avoid these expenses by outsourcing technical expertise to reliable strategic partners, in particular ZIMSEC.

2.2.2 Outsourcing and Quality

Through outsourcing, businesses can obtain high-quality services, especially from outside experts. The presumption is that when high-quality economic inputs are used in the production process, a high-quality final product and consequently high profit are guaranteed. (Elmuti, 2003). According to Patel and Aran (2005), the majority of outsourcing external service providers, like Six Sigma, attempt to meet quality standards, which results in a significant improvement in quality. To the advantage of both the organization and the outsourced service provider, as production errors and mistakes decrease, so do operating costs.

According to Trunick (2021), one of the main causes of outsourcing is the globalization of businesses. Global product sourcing has made supply chain routes more complex, necessitating the knowledge of 3PL vendors. Many businesses and organizations have adopted just-in-time production practices in response to the need for greater efficiencies (JIT). This has proven to be yet another important consideration in the choice to contract out transport and distribution work. Additionally, the activity being outsourced may become more efficient (Bardi 2018). The interaction between the organization and best-in-class service providers, who are able to benefit from the supplier's creativity and innovation, is what causes this. Additionally, outsourcing can encourage increased efficiencies because it exposes businesses to more competition or even the threat of it (Elmuti and Kathawala, 2000). Contrary to the aforementioned authors, it has been proven that the effective implementation of an outsourcing strategy has been credited with aiding in the increase of capacity, and improvement of quality (Lau and Hurley 2013 Kotabe, Murray and Javalugi 2012)

2.2.3 Outsourcing and Timeous Delivery

In order to provide the highest level of responsiveness on a selective basis for short periods of time, an organization can be fully flexible through outsourcing (Gattorna, 2010). A company is better able to respond to market or environmental changes if its supply chain is flexible. External service providers must adjust to the changes that the organization imposes or mandates as it becomes leaner and meaner. To put it simply, in order to maximize the benefit derived from its capabilities, the organization has the power to dictate the changes needed by the outsourcing service providers.

Higher flexibility is only one of the important performance indicators for logistical services. Gadde and Hulthén's (2009) analysis of outsourcing from a network perspective revealed that 19 this practice affects a wide range of other activities in addition to moving some logistical tasks from one organization to another. According to research by Grossler et al. (2013), domestic outsourcing places more emphasis on capacity flexibility than international outsourcing does on cost savings. Instead of trying to adapt by investing in quickly evolving machinery and technologies as well as other complex systems, outsourcing gives businesses greater flexibility in how they respond to changing market conditions (Konig 2016).

Outsourcing is done to meet world class expectations, according to Kamanga and Ismail (2016). Activities are only outsourced if the outside company has the capacity and capabilities to complete the project. The fundamental assumption behind outsourcing is that "specialist organizations can perform a particular service more efficiently than what internal operations can achieve because a specialist organization has an inherent advantage in producing and delivering a service" (Quinn, 2000). This perception may be influenced by advanced technology, strong management abilities, or economies of scale.

2.3 Empirical Evidence

Studies carried out before have shown credence to productivity, cost reduction, and quality service on the need to outsource transport operations (Somuyiwa et al 2016). This research went on further to state that transport operations are critical in maintaining high customer satisfaction and repeat business. This is due to the relative benefits of lower freight charges and better inventory

distribution due to greater transportation visibility. A case study done for Bidco Africa Limited found out that cost-driven outsourcing enhances short-term and long term performance by reducing costs and risks and boosting operational efficiency. Outsourcing of transport activities aims to increase an organisation's competitiveness, reducing fixed operational costs, and improving service level (Gadde and Hulthein 2009). Transport outsourcing is a trend applied expected to continue to grow significantly in future (Langely et al, 2009). Frequent outsourcing selection criteria include identification of relevant transportation performance variables, carrier mode rates, service levels and carrier performance (Handfield, 2005). Wilding and Juriado (2004), on the other hand, highlighted that some factors have been to influence companies to outsource transport including focus on the business objectives, reduced costs and increased operational efficiency. Transport capacity shortage is one issue to be handled on transport logistics Management.

2.3.1 Outsourcing and Operational Cost

Distribution and logistics can have a variety of different impacts on an organization's financial performance. This is particularly applies when the whole of a business is considered. Traditionally seen as an operational necessity that cannot be avoided, a good logistics operation can also offer opportunities for improving financial performance. Strategic outsourcing resulted in an essential combination of cost and risk reduction (Christopher, 2011). Due to the pooling effect and economies of scale, the supplier lowers costs for all of its clients by spreading these risks among numerous clients. . As a result, choosing the right service provider is essential to reducing costs and risks. Since external vendors have economies of scale and capital investments, they carry out business activities more effectively and efficiently (Elmuti, 2003).

As a result of specialization, economies of scale, and improved efficiencies, among other things, outsourced service providers can offer their services at a lower cost, which results in additional cost savings (Battaglia 2011). The cost evaluation must be carefully completed, taking into account the effects of time and capacity utilization of the organization's assets, to see a clear comparative cost picture (Burt et al., 2010). By lowering its investment in warehouse facilities, materials handling equipment, and transportation equipment, an organization can reduce its working capital through outsourcing (Kathawala, Zang and Shao, 2005).

2.3.2 Outsourcing and Quality

Through outsourcing, businesses can obtain high-quality services, especially from outside experts. The presumption is that when high-quality economic inputs are used in the production process, a high-quality final product and consequently high profit are guaranteed. (Elmuti, 2003). According to Patel and Aran (2005), the majority of outsourcing external service providers, like Six Sigma, attempt to meet quality standards, which results in a significant improvement in quality. Many businesses and organizations have adopted just-in-time production practices in response to the need for greater efficiencies (JIT). This has proven to be yet another important consideration in the choice to contract out transport and distribution work. Additionally, the activity being outsourced may become more efficient (Bardi 2018).

2.3.3 Outsourcing and Timeous Delivery

Transportation is playing an important role in many logistics systems because after liberalization of transportation law managers could achieve better service level at lower costs than before. Furthermore, since the strategy just-in-time became more popular, resulting in decrease in inventory levels, transportation was and is often used to compensate the potential bad impact on customer service level (Gourdin, 2001). The results of not-in-time delivery may be poor service level, lost sales and customer dissatisfaction. It gives the first view of the company for the customer, if goods will be delivered on time firm seems to be reliable, so definitely transportation has one of the most significant impact on customer satisfaction throughout the entire supply chain. The service characteristics that affect client fulfillment are: consistency of service, time-in-transit, ability to offer door-to-door transport and flexibility (Stock, Lambert 2001).

2.4 Gap analysis

The current study intends to determine the influence of outsourcing examination material transportation services on operational performance at the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council. A range of distinct factors have influenced the outsourcing of transportation services, as detailed in several studies (Bakar et al., 2014). In addition, there are several other studies that show the factors that influence transportation service outsourcing. The conclusions of the existing studies do not agree, and the results contradict each other. According to Somuyiwa et al. (2015), outsourcing has a considerable impact on logistics performance. Sherman (2013), on the other

hand, indicated that the outsourcing of logistic functions is less trustworthy and ineffective. Similarly, Meidut-Kavaliauskien, Aranskis, and Litvinenko (2014) noted how quality is a factor that influences the company's logistic success since it influences customer satisfaction. Groote and Yücesan (2011), on the other hand, contend that product variety is the most important factor influencing an organization's logistical performance . Yuen and Chan (2010) conducted another contradictory study, claiming that service quality, rather than product quality, influences organizational effectiveness. The preceding research on the current topic demonstrates that there is no general agreement among the writers of the many studies on a specific point relating to logistic performance.

Furthermore, these studies are not specific to the public sector and do not address the factors that are specific to the outsourcing of logistic functions. The private sector industry is mostly equipped with the latest technology and processes as well as quality human resources, so whether outsourcing could be beneficial to them is yet to be seen. As a result of the analysis of the preceding past studies, it is clear that there is no agreement in the findings of these studies on logistics performance, and the literatures that are available to address the topic are highly insufficient and also not specific to the case of the public sector in Zimbabwe. Based on this, it is possible to conclude that there is a void in the published literature that analyzes the impact of outsourcing transportation services and its influencing elements in the case of Zimsec. As a result, the current study aims to fill a gap in the literature. The highlighted gap is filled by studying the concept of the influence of outsourcing transportation services during examination material distribution. Zimbabwe School Examinations Council is one example. This study has helped to broaden the scope of the topic under investigation.

2.5 Chapter summary

The chapter focused on theoretical frameworks and justification, empirical evidence and gap analysis of the outsourcing of transport services and logistical performance mainly in the private. The next chapter presented the research methodology.

UNIT THREE

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with setting out the research methodology that the researcher adopted in carrying out the study. This is the blueprint for the procedures in data collection which the study sought in advancing the enquiry from being an abstract to becoming a realistic secondary data collection process. It clearly specifies the research design that was employed in the study, the population involved, and the sampling techniques that were employed and why they were selected.

3.1. Population and Sampling

The population for this study comprised all public schools in Harare. However, just like most developing countries there are no updated official records of private schools operating in Zimbabwe. The failure to obtain a sampling frame for the target population led the researchers into making use of purposive (Strewing & Stead, 2013). Purposive sampling has low cost and easy access to data (Saunders et al., 2016). The use of purposive sampling in this studies focused on schools in Harare and is not without precedence.

3.2 Research Design

In order to effectively explore and analyse the impact transport outsourcing services on operational performance, this study adopts a single-method research design ,quantitative research methods providing a comprehensive perspective on the subject matter (Creswell, 201In this research, the researcher used secondary data collection method .Secondary data is data collected by someone

other than the actual user. It means that the information is already available, and someone analyses it. The secondary data includes magazines, newspapers, books, journals, etc. It may be either published data or unpublished data. An observation of business forms together with schedules which were used by drivers and school examination committee during the distributing the examination materials to schools in Harare .

3.3 Measures

The three independent variables of outsourcing strategy were measured in a binary format where 1 represents pursuing of the strategy and 0 meant not pursuing the strategy that is outsourcing and insourcing of transportation services. The study measured three variables related to the operational performance that are cost, quality and time. These three operational performance related variables were measured under the insourcing and outsourcing conditions.

3.4 Research Instruments

3.4.1 Quantitative Data Collection

To ensure a well-rounded understanding of impact of transport outsourcing services at within ZIMSEC, quantitative data were collected from the same sample of 34 schools in the Harare Region. Observing the business forms and contracts used by transporters and examination committee members within the school to receive and send examination materials across selected examination centres.

3.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis encompassed various statistical techniques. Initially, MANOVA was employed to summarize and present the quantitative data in a clear and concise manner. Descriptive statistics included measures such as means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions.

By integrating a quantitative data analysis method, this study aimed to provide a holistic and comprehensive understanding of outsourcing transportation services on ZIMSEC's operational

performance. The triangulation of findings from the selected approach strengthened the research's rigor and enriched the depth of insights into the subject matter.

3.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter dwells much into issues pertaining to the research methodology and it defined the data collection mechanisms that the study looked into and the justifications that are very much needed. The next chapter looked into the presentation and analysis of research findings.

UNIT 4

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The findings of this study address sample features, hypotheses testing, and verifying the statistical assumptions of the statistical instrument used for hypotheses testing. Descriptive statistics was used in certain statistical data analysis to aid in a better understanding of the concepts.

4.2 Hypothesis Testing

Table 4:1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics				
	Outsourcing	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Cost	Outsourcing	5.8000	.00000	32
	In-sourcing	4.7000	.00000	32
	Total	5.2500	.55435	64
Time	Outsourcing	33.4375	3.16164	32
	In-sourcing	32.2188	2.73253	32
	Total	32.8281	2.99499	64
Quality	Outsourcing	4.0000	1.66559	32
	In-sourcing	5.2500	1.29515	32
	Total	4.6250	1.60851	64

Table 4.2 Multivariate Tests

Multivariate Tests^a									
Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^c
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.993	4337.726 ^b	2.000	61.000	.000	.993	8675.452	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.007	4337.726 ^b	2.000	61.000	.000	.993	8675.452	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	142.221	4337.726 ^b	2.000	61.000	.000	.993	8675.452	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	142.221	4337.726 ^b	2.000	61.000	.000	.993	8675.452	1.000
Outsourcing	Pillai's Trace	.177	6.556 ^b	2.000	61.000	.003	.177	13.111	.896
	Wilks' Lambda	.823	6.556 ^b	2.000	61.000	.003	.177	13.111	.896
	Hotelling's Trace	.215	6.556 ^b	2.000	61.000	.003	.177	13.111	.896
	Roy's Largest Root	.215	6.556 ^b	2.000	61.000	.003	.177	13.111	.896
a. Design: Intercept + Outsourcing									
b. Exact statistic									
c. Computed using alpha = .05									

Table 4.3 Test of between- Subjects Effects

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects									
Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^d
Corrected Model	Cost	19.360 ^a	1	19.360	.	.	1.000	.	.
	Time	23.766 ^b	1	23.766	2.722	.104	.042	2.722	.369
	Quality	25.000 ^c	1	25.000	11.232	.001	.153	11.232	.910
Intercept	Cost	1764.000	1	1764.000	.	.	1.000	.	.
	Time	68971.891	1	68971.891	7899.338	.000	.992	7899.338	1.000
	Quality	1369.000	1	1369.000	615.058	.000	.908	615.058	1.000
Outsourcing	Cost	19.360	1	19.360	.	.	1.000	.	.
	Time	23.766	1	23.766	2.722	.104	.042	2.722	.369
	Quality	25.000	1	25.000	11.232	.001	.153	11.232	.910
Error	Cost	.000	62	.000					
	Time	541.344	62	8.731					
	Quality	138.000	62	2.226					
Total	Cost	1783.360	64						
	Time	69537.000	64						
	Quality	1532.000	64						
Corrected Total	Cost	19.360	63						
	Time	565.109	63						
	Quality	163.000	63						
a. R Squared = 1.000 (Adjusted R Squared = 1.000)									
b. R Squared = .042 (Adjusted R Squared = .027)									
c. R Squared = .153 (Adjusted R Squared = .140)									
d. Computed using alpha = .05									

Table 4.6 Parameter Estimators

Parameter Estimates										
Dependent Variable	Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^b
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Cost	Intercept	4.700	.000	.	.	4.700	4.700	1.000	.	.

	[Outsourcing=1.00]	1.100	.000	.	.	1.100	1.100	1.000	.	.
	[Outsourcing=2.00]	0 ^a	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Time	Intercept	32.219	.522	61.680	.000	31.175	33.263	.984	61.680	1.000
	[Outsourcing=1.00]	1.219	.739	1.650	.104	-.258	2.695	.042	1.650	.369
	[Outsourcing=2.00]	0 ^a	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Quality	Intercept	5.250	.264	19.906	.000	4.723	5.777	.865	19.906	1.000
	[Outsourcing=1.00]	-1.250	.373	-3.351	.001	-1.996	-.504	.153	3.351	.910
	[Outsourcing=2.00]	0 ^a	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
a. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.										
b. Computed using alpha = .05										

A one-way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine the effects of outsourcing and insourcing on three dependent variables conceptualized as the dimensions of operational performance: cost, time, and quality. Considering that the study has two dependent variable that are continuous and categorical independent variables, a MANOVA statistical tool was chosen since it simultaneously assesses multiple dependent variables (Field, 2018). In order to produce the results that are generalizable the statistical assumptions were assessed (Saunders et al., 2016).

Multivariate normality was assessed indirectly through univariate normality tests using the Shapiro-Wilk test and multivariate outliers using the Mahalanobis distance. The Shapiro-Wilk tests produced statistically significant results implying that all the dependent variables were not approximately normally distributed. The Mahalanobis distance value was also above the critical value implying the absence of multivariate normality. Considering that there were a number of violations of MANOVA assumptions, Pillai's Trace which is robust to most of these violations was used for interpreting the results. Furthermore, for degrees of freedom more than one, and small and unequal sample sizes, Pillai's criterion is more robust (Field, 2018; Hair et al., 2014; Tabachnick & Fidel, 2013).

The null hypothesis that the sample population means on a set of the operational performance related to dependent variables do not vary across different levels of outsourcing and insourcing was not supported. MANOVA results shown in Table 4. 3 indicate that outsourcing, Pillai's Trace $V = .794$, $F(2, 672) = 8.14$, $p > .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .737$, observed power = 1.000, and FP strategy, Pillai's Trace $V = .841$, $F(2, 672) = 8.14$, $p > .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .737$, observed power = 1.000 significantly affect the combined dependent variables of cost, quality, time.

The multivariate effect sizes were very big. Follow-up tests are supposed to be conducted after a significant MANOVA result since MANOVA is an omnibus test which does not indicate the exact groups that have got some statistical differences (Field, 2018). The operational performance (cost, time and delivery) were subjected to a one-way analysis of variance having two transportation outsourcing services (Insourcing, Outsourcing), all the effects were statistically significant at the .05 significance level. The main effect for transportation outsourcing strategy, presented in Table 4.2, was significant, $F(1, 96) = 32.124$, $P < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .993$, observed Power = 1.000, indicating that the average time were lower for insourcing category ($M = 5.8\%$, $SD = 7.08$) than for the outsourcing category (22.76%, 14.88).

The main effect for outsourcing strategy was significant, $F(1, 96) = 59.362$, $P < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .382$, observed power = 1.000, indicating that the average levels of cost were lower for insourcing category ($M = 5.1\%$, $SD = 3.08$) than for the outsourcing category (25.24%, $SD = 14.71$). The observed power indicated that there was a 100% chance that the results could have come out significant for both analyses. The interaction effect was as well significant, $F(1, 96) = 8.932$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .085$, observed power = .841, indicating that the insourcing effect was greater in all condition. The observed power indicated that there was an 84% chance that the results could have come out significant for both analyses.

The main effect for outsourcing strategy was significant, $F(1, 96) = 61.120$, $P < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .389$, observed power = 1.000, indicating that the average levels of quality were lower for insourcing ($M = 5.3\%$, $SD = 6.18$) than for the outsourcing (23.3%). The main effect for FP strategy was significant, $F(1, 96) = 155.036$, $P < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .618$, observed power = 1.000, indicating that the average levels of quality were lower for FP category ($M = 3.64\%$, $SD = 1.63$)

than for the non-operational performance category ($M = 11.6\%$, $SD = 5.79$). The observed power indicated that there was a 100% chance that the results could have come out significant for both analyses. The interaction effect was as well significant, $F(1, 96) = 20.266$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .174$, observed power = .994, indicating that the operational performance was greater.

The observed power indicated that there was a 99.4% chance that the results could have come out significant for both analyses. The main effect for outsourcing was significant, $F(1, 24) = 196.673$, $P < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .993$, observed power = 1.000, indicating that the average le time were lower for insourcing category ($M = 5.3\%$, $SD = 6.18$) than for the non-outsourcing category (23.3%).

4.3 Discussion on Findings

The study found that there is a significant association between transport outsourcing and reduction in cost at ZIMSEC. These findings confirm those from previous studies. There should be a clear identification of both the depth and width (scope) of outsourcing responsibility for its success. For example Simon et al. (2009) identify security and controlling issues, (Sparrow, 2005) argues on hidden cost and loss of knowledge and expertise and more importantly.

The study found that there is a significant association between transport outsourcing and improved service quality. The findings confirm those from previous studies. The current transport outsourcing at ZIMSEC has resulted in use of environmentally friendly vehicles and implementation of strategies for future improvement. The above findings are in concurrence to existing literature by Porter (1989), Christopher (2005), Contractor and Lorange (1986) both strongly regard the ‘joint effects’ outsourcing in attaining competitive advantage (seeking high ground).

The study found that there is a significant association between transport outsourcing and quick service delivery .Due to improved communication with examination centers, examinations materials were picked up on time from schools .These findings confirm that if outsourcing is carefully planned and implemented according to the requirements of business expansion between the participants, firms can reap good results as is the case of Wal-Mart, Boeing. The outsourcing models worldwide were successful due to mutual trust in the formation strategic partnerships, thus

mutual trust is a key factor to the success of outsourcing relationships in the Energy (Sparrow, 2005).

4.4 Chapter Summary

The data collected was sufficient to meet the objectives of the research and enables to draw meaningful conclusions. The respondents gave relevant and valuable data of the outsourcing performance at The Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council. The data analysis in this chapter helped to show the areas of emphasis on the outsourcing strategy and the problems associated with adopting incompatible partners in outsourcing. Therefore it will be possible to draw meaningful conclusions and make necessary recommendations, making use of the information obtained.

UNIT FIVE

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

As the final chapter providing an overview of all the study's findings, it delivers the study's conclusions and suggestions. It starts with descriptions of the key findings, covering every goal in the research. Following that, each study question's conclusions are presented, and lastly, recommendations are offered, offering a thorough analysis of what should be done in light of the research findings. In general, most departments have been embracing the idea of frameworks of agreement in public procurement.

5.2 Major summaries

The summaries are given per each of the study.

5.2.1 The impact of outsourcing transportation services on operational cost

The study explored the impact of outsourcing transport services on the operational performance of ZIMSEC. Businesses across the board can benefit from outsourcing logistics operations and improve their supply chain. To boost productivity, lower operating expenses associated with maintaining an internal logistics staff, and obtain real-time logistics insight; businesses outsource their transportation operations to third-party logistics (3PL) companies.

Outsourcing is the temporary transfer of a portion of an organization's operations to a service provider. A company that engages a transport logistics service provider to handle transport services on its behalf is said to be outsourcing transport logistics. Outsourcing is the decision made by management to assign non-core business operations to a third party vendor. Willcocks states that

shipping, warehousing, packaging, transportation, and distributions are examples of non-core corporate tasks that are outsourced. Through outsourcing, businesses can transfer non-core operations to outside vendors, allowing them to utilize their resources and focus on the organization's primary goal.

5.2.2 How outsourcing of transportation services improve quality of deliveries at Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council.

As seen in the study, outsourcing transportation services help improve service delivery within the operations of ZIMSEC. Due to the highly specialized nature of logistics, businesses frequently hire external logistics organizations, also known as logistics service providers or 3PLs, to handle warehousing and transportation needs. In addition, these organizations can occasionally be enlisted to advice on the creation and application of best practices for the management of the transportation companies that provide the services as well as the actual transportation itself. Businesses often contract out a range of tasks to fulfill various goals, such as cutting expenses, enhancing flexibility, raising market coverage, and improving product quality (Lau & Zhang, 2006; Skjoett-Larsen, 2002), or even to have easy access to more space.

Businesses are under increasing pressure to look for methods to increase their profitability and competitive edge, and this includes optimizing the efficacy and efficiency of their logistical operations. Businesses utilize outsourcing to cut costs by assigning some of their work to outside vendors rather than finishing it in-house. As part of their core business logistics activities, manufacturing organizations primarily rely on outsourcing in order to cut costs associated with shipping, distribution, and warehousing.

5.2.3 Outsourcing of transportation services yield timely deliveries of the examination materials at The Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council.

Despite many promising features and factors provided by a number of logistics service providers, a question still remains as to who would be most appropriate to have intrinsic knowledge of the customer's requirement, and while maintaining the accountability, responsibility and entails

capability to not just strategize, but also to possess the necessary competencies to execute the operational aspects of the manufacturing companies. It has been emphasized that, logistics is a functional system which is crucial for improving efficiency, both in the flow of goods and information and to meet low-cost, fast, and reliable delivery objectives within a company and throughout a network of companies.

Logistics significantly contributes to company's competitive advantage in both efficiency and effectiveness. Logistics activities and processes are fundamental elements that a company's supply chain capabilities and competences are based upon.

5.3 Conclusions

According to the study, the majority of respondents had been employed by the company for a longer amount of time, thus they are aware of the impact that outsourcing has on business performance. The Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council outsources its non-core transportation operations in order to increase stakeholder satisfaction, enhance exam paper delivery performance, and provide additional efficiency and effectiveness gains.

To save time, money, and procedure, businesses and government agencies are turning more and more to outside companies to handle tasks that were formerly handled inside. According to the report, if transport service outsourcing is done correctly, it can lead to better leads, more delivery, flexibility, and a decrease in operational costs.

Outsourcing transportation services can give companies a competitive edge. An informed choice is necessary for outsourcing to be successful. When competent management has access to accurate, factual data, they can prevent costly mistakes that are difficult to undo. In the end, prompt reaction times to tactical possibilities and threats are critical to the success of transport outsourcing. It is essential for organizations to manage their outsourcing relationships effectively. Businesses can bolster their resources and increase their competitive advantage by strategically using outsourcing.

One of the main responsibilities of management is to make sure that the company can compete effectively in the market. By implementing an outsourcing strategy, the company can experience a reduction in operating costs, a concentration of its core business, improved customer satisfaction,

timely service delivery to clients, a faster response to customer demands, a reduction in the commitment to full-time human resource expenses, improved product quality, a reduction in capital investment, improved employee technical know-how, access to specialized industry knowledge, and an increase in output per employee.

5.4 Recommendations

Since this study has shown that transport process outsourcing can lower an organization's operating costs, the following recommendations can be summed up based on its findings. In order to prevent delays, management should make an effort to offer additional frameworks for choosing outsourcing transporters that will help the firms in the affected area. It is advised that businesses such as ZIMSEC look for strategies to comprehend and maintain clients' trust in the examination board. According to the study's findings, organizational performance is impacted by the use of suitable outsourced transporting tactics. To prevent misunderstandings, ZIMSEC should make sure that there is efficient communication with transportation suppliers.

5.4.1 A partnership approach.

To end the confrontational culture that has developed in some relationships and to forge a more constructive and cooperative alliance between the contractor and the user. An advantageous partnership is preferred, in which both sides collaborate to find methods to cut expenses and improve services.

5.4.2 The use of incentivized contracts.

The service provider is given explicit opportunity in the contract to identify and implement cost-cutting or service-improvement strategies. The important thing is that the service provider is compensated for finding and putting these enhancements into place.

5.5 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

All research endeavours inevitably possess certain constraints. This study endeavour is not an anomaly. This study's additional objective is to apply a comparison analysis to two transport outsourcing companies. Benefits, hazards, and reasons for outsourcing can all be compared through comparative analysis. Furthermore, since a public sector instance was used in this study, future research may compare and contrast private sector and public sector organizations to examine the applicability of outsourcing in the private sector.

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Secondary Data Collection (Driver Forms and Headmasters Forms)						
Name of Schools	Insourcing			Outsourcing		
	Variable			Variable		
	Operational Cost Per km in USD	Delivery Time in minutes	Service Quality Rating Out of 7	Operational Cost Per km in USD	Delivery Time in minutes	Service Quality Rating Out of 7
Budiriro 1	4.70	30	3	5.80	30	2
Budiriro 2	4.70	32	4	5.80	33	3
Budiriro 3	4.70	32	4	5.80	35	4
Budiriro 4	4.70	30	3	5.80	31	5
Budiriro 5	4.70	32	4	5.80	38	7
Glen Norah 7	4.70	30	5	5.80	28	2
Glen Norah Infill	4.70	31	6	5.80	36	3
Glen View 6	4.70	30	7	5.80	30	5
Glen View 7	4.70	32	7	5.80	35	6
Glen View 8	4.70	30	7	5.80	33	1
Glen View 9	4.70	34	7	5.80	34	5
Kuwadzana 1	4.70	36	6	5.80	36	2
Kuwadzana 2	4.70	30	5	5.80	40	3
Kuwadzana 3	4.70	33	4	5.80	32	4
Kuwadzana 4	4.70	30	7	5.80	32	5
Kuwadzana 5	4.70	31	5	5.80	31	3
Kuwadzana 6	4.70	33	6	5.80	30	4
Kuwadzana 7	4.70	40	4	5.80	35	3
Kuwadzana 8	4.70	30	4	5.80	30	5
Fundo	4.70	31	5	5.80	33	6
Dzivaresekwa 6	4.70	30	4	5.80	35	7
Hatcliffe 1	4.70	32	5	5.80	31	1
Hatcliffe 2	4.70	30	7	5.80	38	2
Lyton	4.70	34	6	5.80	28	4
Marimba Park	4.70	36	5	5.80	36	5
Sunningdale 2	4.70	30	4	5.80	30	5
Warren Park 3	4.70	33	6	5.80	35	6
Warren Park 4	4.70	30	7	5.80	33	6
Warren Park 5	4.70	31	7	5.80	34	4
Warren Park 6	4.70	33	5	5.80	36	3
Westlea	4.70	40	4	5.80	40	2
Tafara 5	4.70	35	5	5.80	32	5