Current Outsourcing Practices Employed in Acquiring Construction Consulting Services in Tanzania: Approaches, Partnering and Services (A Qualitative Study)

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Abstract: Outsourcing is a common practice used by most construction consultancy firms in Tanzania. Despite the daily application of outsourcing to construction consultancy services, there is no structured approach which guides outsourcing procedures, and as a result, consultancy firms face challenges when practicing outsourcing. This study aimed to assess the current outsourcing practices for construction consultancy services in Tanzania as the first step towards structural formalization.

Focusing on construction consulting firms, including Architectural, Quantity Surveying, and Engineering firms, this study used a phenomenology design. It employed a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews for data collection and content analysis to analyse data.

The study revealed that in Tanzania, "functional outsourcing" is the predominant approach, followed by offshore outsourcing. The most commonly outsourced vendors are those with prior experience, followed by those recommended by others. The primary reasons for outsourcing are "cost-saving," "time-saving," and "access to expertise."

Moreover, architectural firms primarily outsource the preparation of 3D visualization, structured design, detailed design, and supervision of works. Quantity surveying firms mostly outsource pre-contract services and re-measurement works, while civil engineering firms outsource pre-contract works, material test works, and supervision of works.

The study recommends that firms leverage the opportunities brought by project-based and strategic partnership outsourcing practices, which are underutilized. Additionally, formal screening and prequalification of vendors should be emphasized, and firms ought to expand the pool of services they outsource to become more relevant.

Keywords: Outsourcing Practices, Construction Consulting Services, Tanzania.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Outsourcing, a phenomenon that originated in the 1950s, gained significant prominence in the 1980s as organizations across various global business sectors, including financial services, healthcare, energy systems, telecommunications, computers, and construction, began adopting this strategy. Since then, outsourcing has undergone a continuous evolution. Initially, it was employed as a powerful cost-reduction tool, later transitioning into a means of accessing external skills, knowledge, and competencies for differentiation advantages. Moreover, it has evolved into a tool for creating new business models that foster flexibility and adaptability (Verroiopoulos and Sfakianaki, 2015).

While outsourcing has been well-established in numerous sectors, its integration into the construction industry occurred in the early 1990s and has since become a crucial factor in the overall success of construction firms, including those providing consulting services (Akbari *et al.*, 2017). Construction consulting firms often embrace outsourcing as a strategic approach to enhance operational efficiency, manage costs, and tap into specialized expertise. By outsourcing services, firms delegate specific functions or tasks to external vendors or partners, allowing them to focus on their core competencies while benefiting from valuable external resources (Ranasinghe *et al.*, 2018, 2022).

In developing countries, the growing demand for services from construction consulting firms coupled with the scarcity of in-house expertise often drives organizations to outsource their functions (Chandramohan et al., 2020). Within this context, countries in the region face unique challenges, such as resource constraints, limited access to specialized skills, and the delicate balance between cost-effectiveness and service quality (Alkali et al., 2016; Ranasinghe et al., 2022). Consequently, understanding the specific dynamics and intricacies of outsourcing within this regional context becomes essential. However, the outsourcing process in these firms is not exempt from challenges. Firms encounter complexities in various areas, including vendor selection, contract negotiation, communication, quality control, and risk management (Verroiopoulos and Sfakianaki, 2015). These challenges can impede the realization of anticipated benefits and potentially result in suboptimal outcomes if left unaddressed (Verroiopoulos and Sfakianaki, 2015). Nevertheless, local consultancy firms are increasingly exploring outsourcing opportunities to tap into external expertise, optimize their operations, and deliver value-added services to clients (Tekka, 2021; Tesha et al., 2017).

Previous studies relating to Outsourcing in the construction industry generally explored outsourcing practices in different settings, such as Iran (Akbari *et al.*, 2017), Sri Lanka (Ranasinghe *et al.*, 2018, 2022), and Greece (Verroiopoulos and Sfakianaki, 2015). However, the findings

and practices from other countries may not be directly applicable to the specific context of construction consultancy services in Tanzania and the broader sub-Saharan Africa region due to differences in culture, economy and knowledge, considering the growing significance of outsourcing in the consultancy industry, it is crucial to fill this gap. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by investigating the current outsourcing process employed by construction consultancy firms in service delivery as the first step towards structural formalization of outsourcing these services so as to harmonize the existing systems with global standards.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. General View on Outsourcing

In the late 1980s, the supply chain and outsourcing expression were first used (Pettersson & Segerstedt, 2013). Since then, outsourcing has evolved beyond information systems and it has been a progressively trendy method of expansion and development for companies (Christopher, 2016; Modarress, Ansari, & Thies, 2016). Examining the current academic literature brought different characteristics of outsourcing, such as reasons, types, levels, and success elements of outsourcing.

B. Outsourcing Reasons

Firms decide to outsource to reduce the total cost of their business operation (Cohen & Russel, 2013; Marquez-Ramos & Martines-Zarzoso, 2014). Outsourcing is not only to reduce costs of production but also firms decide to outsource for other reasons, such as enhancement in financial performance (Brown & Wilson, 2005; Lysons & Farrington, 2012). Outsourcing decreases the costs of business operations by shifting the fixed cost to variable costs (Assaf & Al-Nehmi, 2011; Koh Ser Mui, 2003; Liu & Tyagi, 2016). Outsourcing practices offer more opportunities to find skills that are not available at the time to the organization (Hansen, Muller, & Pottenger, 2008; Slack, NrandonJoes, Johnston, & Betts, 2015), as well as an ecological talent establishment, via retrieving support from third party's organization (Koh Ser Mui, 2003). The firm can accomplish quality improvements (Quinn, 2000; Sepehri, 2013) or performance improvement by contracting to an outside organization and, it should be noticed as a potential improvement, to succeed at a better and higher service level (Assaf & Al-Nehmi, 2011).

C. Outsourcing Types

In a 2015 study, Oshri, Kotlarsky, and Willcocks identified three types of outsourcing. Total outsourcing involves shifting over eighty percent of a firm's business functions to a third-party provider. Selective outsourcing entails assigning specific tasks to one or more external providers while retaining the management of twenty to eighty percent of in-house business functions. Transitional outsourcing is a temporary outsourcing arrangement during a major organizational change, such as the implementation of new technology.

D. Outsourcing Levels

Brown and Wilson (2005) defined three levels of outsourcing: tactical, strategic, and transformational. When a company encounters specific issues, tactical outsourcing is seen as the quickest way to address the problem. Strategic outsourcing is an innovative approach to maintaining an organization's primary value chain or supply chain and its core capabilities, while transformational outsourcing is a technique to be able to respond to a changing marketplace.

E. Types of Outsourcing Models

Consultant firms can adopt various outsourcing models based on their specific needs and objectives. Here are four commonly used outsourcing models in the context of firms including consultancy firms (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2019):

- Project-based outsourcing: In this model, consultancy firms outsource specific projects or assignments to external vendors. It involves engaging vendors on a project-byproject basis, where the scope, deliverables, timelines, and pricing are clearly defined in a contract or agreement. This model allows firms to access specialized expertise for specific projects without the need for long-term commitments. Benefits of Project-based outsourcing include Flexibility to engage external vendors as per project requirements, Access to specialized skills and knowledge for specific project needs, and Cost savings by avoiding long-term commitments and overhead costs. The challenges of Project-based Outsourcing include maintaining consistent quality standards across different vendors, Effective communication and coordination for project-specific requirements, and Potential delays or disruptions if the vendor fails to deliver as per expectations.
- Functional outsourcing: In this model, consultancy firms • outsource specific functions or tasks to external vendors. Instead of outsourcing entire projects, firms identify specific areas of their consultant operations that can be delegated to specialized vendors. For example, firms may outsource cost estimation, procurement, or bill of quantities preparation to external experts while retaining control over other aspects of their operations. Benefits of Functional outsourcing include: Access to specialized expertise and resources for specific functions; Focus on core competencies while outsourcing non-core tasks and Potential cost savings by leveraging external vendor efficiencies. On the other hand, challenges of Functional include: Smoothing integration outsourcing and coordination amid in-house and outsourced functions; Maintaining quality control and consistency across different vendors and risk of dependency on external vendors for critical functions.
- Strategic partnership outsourcing: This model involves establishing strategic partnerships with external vendors to

collaborate on long-term projects or initiatives. Consultants enter into mutually beneficial relationships with vendors with complementary skills and resources. These partnerships often involve joint planning, resource sharing, and long-term commitments to achieve shared goals. Benefits of Strategic partnership outsourcing involve: Access to a broader range of skills, expertise, and resources; Shared risk and rewards through collaborative project execution; and improved innovation and problemsolving through combined knowledge. Again, challenges of Strategic partnership outsourcing include: Building and nurturing strong relationships with external partners; ensuring alignment of objectives, expectations, and contractual agreements and effective communication and coordination for joint planning and decision-making.

Offshore outsourcing: This model involves outsourcing • consultant functions or projects to vendors located in other countries or offshore locations. Offshore outsourcing is typically driven by cost advantages, as vendors in certain regions may offer lower labor costs. It requires managing communication and coordination across different time zones and cultural contexts. Benefits of Offshore Outsourcing: Cost savings through access to lower-cost labor markets; 24/7 project coverage and accelerated project timelines; Potential access to specialized skills and resources not available locally. While, Challenges of Offshore Outsourcing include Overcoming communication and language barriers; ensuring compliance with local regulations, legal frameworks, and standards and Managing potential cultural differences and work culture variations.

Consultant firms should carefully evaluate their requirements, objectives, and potential risks when choosing an outsourcing model. The selection should align with their business strategies and provide a balance between cost savings, quality control, and operational efficiency (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2010).

F. Selecting Outsourcing Partners

According to Cui and Liang, (2018), in order to effectively streamline outsourcing practices, firms must carefully select outsourcing partners that align with their values and goals. In today's competitive business landscape, consultant firms are increasingly turning to outsourcing to leverage specialized expertise, enhance operational efficiency, and drive cost savings. However, selecting the right outsourcing partner is critical for the success of these firms. Cui and Liang, (2018) outlines the process of selecting outsourcing partners in consultant firms, highlighting key considerations and steps to ensure a mutually beneficial and productive relationship.

• Assessing Needs and Objectives: The first step in selecting an outsourcing partner is to assess the consultant firm's specific needs and objectives. This involves identifying the tasks or functions that are suitable for outsourcing and considering factors such as cost, resource availability, and expertise required. By understanding the firm's goals and requirements, the selection process can be tailored to find an outsourcing partner that aligns with these objectives.

- Research and Shortlisting: Once the needs and objectives are defined, the consultant firm should conduct thorough research to identify potential outsourcing partners. This involves seeking recommendations, conducting online searches, attending industry events, and reviewing case studies and testimonials. The goal is to gather a list of potential vendors that have a track record of success, relevant expertise, and a good reputation in the industry.
- Evaluating Vendor Capabilities: The next step is to evaluate the capabilities of the shortlisted vendors. This evaluation should include factors such as the vendor's experience in the consultancy field, portfolio of projects, team expertise, and ability to meet deadlines and deliver quality results. Reviewing the vendor's financial stability is important, as a financially secure partner is more likely to provide consistent and reliable services.
- Conducting Due Diligence: Due diligence is crucial to ensure the suitability of the outsourcing partner. This involves checking references, contacting previous clients, and conducting site visits if possible. It is essential to validate the vendor's claims, assess their reliability, and gain insights into their communication, responsiveness, and problem-solving abilities. Through due diligence, the consultant firm can comprehensively understand the vendor's capabilities and cultural fit.
- Requesting Proposals and Negotiation: After shortlisting vendors and completing due diligence, the consultant firm should request detailed proposals from the selected candidates. The proposals should outline the vendor's understanding of the firm's requirements, their proposed approach, timelines, pricing structure, and any value-added services they offer. This provides a basis for comparison and aids in the negotiation process. Negotiations should focus on reaching a mutually beneficial agreement that addresses the firm's needs while considering the vendor's capabilities and limitations.
- Legal and Contractual Considerations: Once a suitable outsourcing partner is identified and negotiations are finalized, legal and contractual considerations come into play. The consultant firm should work with legal counsel to draft a comprehensive contract that outlines the scope of work, deliverables, timelines, performance metrics, confidentiality clauses, intellectual property rights, termination clauses, and dispute resolution mechanisms. Ensuring that the contract provides sufficient protection for the firm's interests while fostering a collaborative and transparent relationship is crucial.
- Pilot Project or Trial Period: To mitigate risks and ensure compatibility, starting with a pilot project or a trial period with the outsourcing partner is advisable. This allows the consultant firm to evaluate the vendor's performance in real-world scenarios, assess their adherence to timelines

and quality standards, and determine if the working relationship meets expectations. The pilot project serves as a validation phase before committing to a long-term partnership.

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Selecting the right outsourcing partner is a strategic decision for consultant firms seeking to optimize their operations and achieve business objectives. By following a systematic process that includes assessing needs, conducting research, evaluating capabilities, performing due diligence, negotiating contracts, and conducting pilot projects, consultant firms can identify an aligned partner.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Approach and Design

This study adopted a qualitative research approach for several reasons. Firstly, as Merriam and Tisdell (2015) highlighted, a qualitative design is particularly suited for exploring and understanding individuals' experiences. Additionally, the rationale for this approach is rooted in its capacity to address the nature of the research questions. Qualitative methods excel in addressing 'why,' 'what,' and 'how' inquiries, allowing for a deeper exploration of underlying reasons and meanings (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Also, phenomenological qualitative research design was the most appropriate for the goal from the outset. This was because, as was previously noted, "a phenomenological design is well suited to studying human experiences" and the study gathered data from consultancy firms which outsource their services to external vendors.

B. Sampling

The unit of analysis for this study is consultant firms in construction which outsource their services namely: architectural firms, quantity surveying firms, and civil engineering firms in Dar es Salaam. These firms were the focus of data collection and analysis. For the purpose of this study, the population comprises all registered consultant firms in construction which practice in Dar es Salaam and have a history of outsourcing their services to others or have received outsourced service themselves. These firms could be architectural, quantity surveying or civil engineering firms. Accordingly, Dar es Salaam has 300 registered Architects firms, 216 registered quantity surveyors firms, (AQRB, 2023) and 102 registered civil consulting engineers firms (ERB, 2023).

Given the specificity of the knowledge required for participating in and contributing to the information, Purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques were employed to select participants for data collection. Purposive sampling helped establish a foundation of relevant knowledge. Snowball sampling, initiated from the purposively selected participants, allowed for expanding the participant pool beyond the initial selection (Kumar, 2018). The determining criteria for a firm to be considered for data collection include Consultant firms Volume 10, Issue 1, January – 2025

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located in Dar es Salaam and Firms that have either outsourced services to others or have received outsourced services themselves. Therefore, herein this study data was collected until reaching the saturation point at the 16 respondents, ensuring a depth of insights rather than a fixed number of participants.

C. Data Collection and Analysis

Therefore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with service providers in consultant firms in Dar es Salaam. These stakeholders included senior management, project managers, quantity surveyors, Architects, and consulting engineers. Qualitative data was analysed using Content Analysis. Content analysis technique involved transcribing the collected data and then codifying qualitative and quantitative information into pre-defined categories in order to derive patterns in the presentation and reporting of information.

IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Characteristics of the Sample

displays the participant's professional Table 1 background, year experience, number of projects participated and contract sum of those projects. The table illustrates that the majority of interviewees (n=13) 81.3% fell within 10> years and 15> years, which implies that the majority of interviewees have experience of more than 10 years. In addition, the participants were from different consultancy firms, 6 interviewees were from architectural firms, 5 interviewees were from Quantity Surveyors firms and 5 were from Civil Engineers firms. Furthermore, all participants have done more than 10 projects and 68.75% of all projects were above 5 Billion contract amount. This shows that the participant's data comes from experienced people who have done more than 10 projects, which are bigger in their capacity. This implies that the data collected is reliable. Since the sample size (n=16) and the level of responsiveness can be regarded as sufficient. According to (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015), data saturation occurs when new data stops offering fresh insights or patterns become repetitive, indicating a comprehensive understanding. They suggest that the sample sizes may range between 15-30 participants, however, this can vary based on the principle of saturation.

Table 1: Interviewee Profile

Interviewee	Designation	Experience	Number of Projects	Contract-Amount	
А	Quantity Surveyor	10> years	10> projects	1BIL>	
В	Quantity Surveyor	6> years	10> projects	1BIL>	
С	Quantity Surveyor	10> years	10> projects	1BIL>	
D	Quantity Surveyor	10> years	10> projects	10BIL>	
Е	Quantity Surveyor	10> years	10> projects	10BIL>	
F	Architect	10> years	10> projects	5BIL>	
G	Architect	10> years	50> projects	100BIL>	
Н	Architect	10> years	15> projects	10BIL>	
Ι	Architect	5> years	15> projects	1BILL>	
J	Architect	10> years	100> projects	4BIL>	
K	Architect	5> years	50> projects	4BIL>	
L	Civil Engineer	10> years	100> projects	10BIL>	
М	Civil Engineer	15> years	100> projects	1BIL>	
Ν	Civil Engineer	15> years	100> projects	10BIL>	
0	Civil Engineer	15> years	100> projects	15BIL>	
Р	Civil Engineer	10> years	100> projects	100BIL>	

B. The Current Outsourcing Practices Employed in Acquiring Consultancy Services in Tanzania.

> Approaches used by Firms in Outsourcing of Consultancy Services.

The results above show that the most Outsourcing approaches used by Consultancy firms in Tanzania are Functional Outsourcing at 39.4% followed by Offshore Outsourcing at 27.3%, then Project-Based at 18.2% and strategic Partnership outsourcing at 15.2%. Project-based and Strategic partnership approaches are mostly used by architectural and Civil Engineering firms.

Approaches	Frequency	Percent	Rank		
Functional Outsourcing	13	39.4%	1		
Offshore Outsourcing	9	27.3%	2		
Project Based Outsourcing	6	18.2%	3		
Strategic Partnership outsourcing	5	15.2%	4		
Total	33	100.0%			

Table 2: Approaches used by Consultancy Firms in Tanzania (Interviewee Perspective)

Notably, Functional outsourcing (39.4%) and offshore outsourcing (27.3%) are more preferred by consulting firms in Tanzania due to their cost efficiency and access to specialized expertise. Functional outsourcing allows firms to delegate specific tasks to external providers with advanced skills, reducing the need for costly in-house specialists. Offshore outsourcing provides significant cost savings by leveraging lower labor costs in other countries while accessing a global talent pool. In contrast, project-based (18.2%) and strategic partnership outsourcing (15.2%) are less favoured due to their typically higher costs and the complexities involved in establishing and managing long-term partnerships or project-specific arrangements (Wilkinson *et al*, 2019). Equally to the results from the findings, Lisse (2014) asserts that the most common outsourcing approaches firms use are Functional Outsourcing, Offshore Outsourcing, Project-Based, and Strategic Partnership, with the latter being particularly prevalent in Architect and Engineering firms. Moreover, functional outsourcing is the most used outsourcing approach by firms (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 2005). Consistently, Sreedevi and Tanwar (2018) support this by adding that functional outsourcing is one of the most strategic tools for firms to gain competitive edge.

Outsourcing Partners

Table 3 summarizes how consultancy firms in Tanzania get their outsourcing partners. The results show that the most effective way firms get their outsourced partners is through vendors' past work experience. This is followed by vendors who are referred and recommended by others. Table 3 below shows results from the 16 interviews conducted in this research.

Outsorcing Partiners	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Past experience	9	33.3%	1
Referal	8	29.6%	2
Recommendation	4	14.8%	3
Trustee	3	11.1%	4
Exhibition	1	3.7%	5
Predefined in TANEPS	1	3.7%	6
Self introduction	1	3.7%	7
Total	27	100.0%	

From the results, consultancy firms in Tanzania employ various methods to identify outsourcing partners, but the most effective approach is leveraging the past work experience of vendors. Firms prioritize this method because a vendor's track record provides tangible proof of their capabilities, reliability, and quality of work, thereby reducing the risks associated with outsourcing. Evaluating past performance allows firms to make informed decisions based on demonstrated expertise and previous project outcomes (Lisse, 2014). Following this, referrals and recommendations are also highly valued. According to Cui and Liang, (2018) referrals offer insights from trusted sources who have firsthand experience with the vendor, ensuring a level of trust and credibility. Furthermore, recommendations similarly provide confidence, as they come from individuals or organizations that vouch for the vendor's proficiency

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and reliability (Wilkinson et al. 2019). For small works Egbert et al., (2009) confirms that informal methods such as referrals are most prevalent to carryout works. These methods collectively help consultancy firms mitigate risks and select partners who are likely to deliver high-quality services efficiently.

Services Outsourced by Consultancy Firms in Tanzania.

On the question of services outsourced by consultancy firms in Tanzania, the results from responsiveness were divided into three parts. The first part will discuss services outsourced by Quantity Survey firms in Tanzania, the second part will show services outsourced by Architectural firms in Tanzania and the third one will discuss services outsourced by Civil Engineering Firms in Tanzania. Table 4.3 below shows results from the 16 interviews conducted in this research.

Table 3: Services Mostly Outsourced by Consultancy Firms in Tanzania						
Firms	Service Outsourced	Frequency	Percent	Rank		
	Pre-Contract	5	45.5%	1		
Quantity Surveying Firms	Re-Measurement	4	36.4%	2		
	Work Valuation	1	9.1%	3		
	Specilized works	1	9.1%	4		
	Total	11	100.0%			
	3D-Visualization	5	33.3%	1		
	Detailed Design	2	13.3%	2		
	Structural Designs	2	13.3%	3		
Architectural Firms	Supervision	2	13.3%	4		
	3D-Modelling	1	6.7%	5		
	Contract Administaration	1	6.7%	6		
	Interior Design	1	6.7%	7		
	Pre-Contract	1	6.7%	8		
	Total	15	100.0%			
	Supervision	5	26.3%	1		
Civil Engineering Firms	Materials Testing	5	26.3%	2		
	Pre-Contract	3	15.8%	3		
	EIA	2	10.5%	4		
	Topo graphical Survey	2	10.5%	5		
	Geometry Design	2	10.5%	6		
	Total	19	100.00%			

The first part described services mostly outsourced by quantity surveying firms, whereby "pre-contract" services are mostly outsourced services, followed by "re-measurement", then "work valuation", and lastly ", specialized works". The second part described services outsourced by Architectural firms whereby the most outsourced services are "3Dvisulization" followed by "Details Design" followed by "Structural Design" and then "Supervision". The third part described services outsourced by civil engineering firms whereby "supervision" is the highest ranked service outsourced by civil engineering firms followed by "Materials testing" and "Pre-Contract" services.

From the results, in Tanzania, consultancy firms outsource various specialized tasks to enhance efficiency and expertise in the construction industry. Quantity surveyors outsource feasibility studies, preparation of Bills of Quantities (BOQ), tender documents, re-measurement works, site visits for records and data, and specialized works like BOQ for civil works and port piling. Similar roles have been identified by Chandramohan et al., (2020). Additionally, Omotayo et al., (2022) states that the duties of a quantity surveyor have expanded to encompass project management, contract administration, dispute settlement, and insurance value in addition to measuring and estimating the quantities and prices of construction projects. Consequently, these days, QSs can be found in broader responsibilities like project management,

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value management, expert testimony, auditing, loss adjustment, and dispute settlement (Chandramohan *et al.*, 2020).

Architects commonly outsource the preparation of detailed drawings, 3D visualizations, and interior design, along with all supervision and contract administration tasks during the post-contract stage. Correspondingly, architects primarily outsource the preparation of drawings, 3D visualization, and supervision of works. This aligns with the social uses of architectural drawing, which help architects set an agenda, define design importance, and communicate with clients (Osmani *et al.*, 2008).

Engineers outsource topographical and geotechnical surveying, materials testing, environmental impact assessments (EIA), geometry design works, and the supervision of projects. Conspicuously, Azzam *et al.*, (2024) provided a case study on the outsourcing of engineering tasks by construction firms in Egypt, revealing a high level of outsourcing, particularly for shop drawings, and a consultancy on efficiency and quality, despite cost concerns. Nevertheless, Choi et al., (2007) asserts that outsourcing testing and inspection is important to enhance objectivity and expert skill.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that the most used approach for the outsourcing of consultancy services is "Functional Outsourcing", followed by "Offshore outsourcing", followed by "Project Based Approach", then "Strategic Partnership". Also, the most outsourced partners are vendors with past experience followed by vendors recommended by others. Furthermore, the study identified three reasons for outsourcing which are "cost saving" followed by "time saving" and then "access to expertise". Additionally, the most outsourced services by Architectural firms are "3D visualization" followed by "structural design" followed by "details design" and lastly "supervision of works". Also, services outsourced by Quantity Survey Firms are pre-contract works and remeasurement works. Furthermore, services outsourced by Civil Engineering firms are "pre-contract" followed by "materials testing" and then "supervision of works".

The study recommends that firms should leverage the opportunities brought by project-based and strategic partnership outsourcing practices as they are underutilized even though they can be advantageous especially in long term projects. Additionally, although informal methods of sourcing vendors like past experience and referrals are prevalent to expand the market and get competitive value for money, vendors should, from time to time, be screened and prequalified before being included in projects. Most of all, Despite the profession, firms ought to expand their pool of services they outsource to become more relevant. This study focused on the current outsourcing practices as they are implemented in Tanzania. Further research can focus on drivers and barriers to outsourcing practices by consultants in Tanzania to add knowledge that will help develop a comprehensive structured approach towards outsourcing construction services.

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