

The Effectiveness of Clusters in Enhancing the Competitive Advantage of Small and Medium Enterprises in Hebron and Salfit Governorates

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Abstract

The current study aims to explain, the role of clusters in enhancing the competitive advantage of small and medium enterprises in Hebron and Salfit governorates. This study targeted three clusters out of five clusters, that are shoes, leather, stone and marble cluster in Hebron Governorate, and the furniture industry cluster in Salfit Governorate.

The study population wherefrom small and medium enterprises in Hebron and Salfit governorates, members of the three clusters, where the number of these three clusters are (90) establishments. A number of (82) surveys were answered, which was distributed to them electronically. To achieve this goal, a questionnaire was designed consisting of (4) sections, where the first section dealt with information about the respondent and the facility, which is (the position, the legal status, ownership, membership in the Chamber of Commerce, and membership In the Federation of Industries, the location, the number of employees, the years of experience, and the year of membership in the cluster, while the second section of (26) included measures that measure the outcomes and benefits of membership in the cluster, and the third section consists of (51) paragraphs it was divided into (6) fields, the first field of (22) paragraphs measure the elements of production, the second of (7) paragraphs that measure demand factors, and the third of (9) paragraphs that measure the availability of supportive and complementary industries, and the fourth of (4) paragraphs that measure company strategy, competition and market structure, and the fifth of (4) (Paragraphs measuring the governmental role, the sixth of (5) paragraphs that measure the available opportunities, and the fourth part of (5) paragraphs measuring the threat factors of the establishment, and all of the paragraphs were involved in measuring the membership of cluster and their impact on the competitive advantage in SMEs in Hebron and Salfit governorates, Note that the method of answering was focused on choosing from t Scale).

Data were collected and statistically processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results have shown that the outcomes and benefits of membership in clusters for SMEs in Hebron and Salfit governorates came with a medium result. Moreover, the findings showed that

the membership outcomes and benefits of membership of clusters for small and medium enterprises in the northern governorates came with a medium result.

Furthermore, the study reached a set of results, the most important of which is that cluster membership and its effect on competitive advantage in SMEs in Hebron and Salfit governorates came with a moderate result. The most important outcomes and benefits of membership of cluster groups were: knowledge management (information exchange and knowledge acquisition), improving production quality, networking and building relationships and expanding the communication network to enhance work, support and advocacy in creating tools for mass economic action and pressure aimed at influencing and raising awareness of economic rights, in addition to the importance of the presence of production and supportive and complementary industries.

Keywords: Clusters, competence, small and medium enterprises, Palestine.

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