

**THE IMPACT OF OUTSOURCING ON THE COMPETITIVE PERFORMANCE
OF INDUSTRIAL EXECUTING ESTABLISHMENTS - A CASE STUDY OF THE
SOREMEP COMPANY IN TLEMCCEN**

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Abstract:

The study aimed to know the impact of outsourcing on the competitive performance of the executing establishments, through a field study of the Metallurgical Industries Corporation (SOREMP) in Tlemcen. In collecting the data, we relied on a questionnaire distributed to 30 individuals responsible for the outsourcing activity of the organization under study.

We used the SPSS program to analyze the results and reached a main result, which is the presence of a statistically significant effect of outsourcing on competitive performance.

The study recommended the necessity of increasing the interest of the facility in developing its relationship with project owners and introducing its services and operational capabilities.

Keywords: Outsourcing ; Industry; Industrial Establishments; The Executing Establishments; Competitive Performance.

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I- Introduction:

International developments pose global challenges that threaten the stability of many economic entities, such as crises of all kinds and fluctuations in oil prices and their impact on income-producing economies that focus their revenues on the hydrocarbon sector, including Algeria. This requires diversifying their activities into other industrial and service fields, and in this context, large organizations have resorted to allocating their supporting activities to more specialized partners, and then focusing on the essentials, within the framework of a legal relationship that lists the practical benefits of ensuring that both parties to the relationship achieve the highest levels of competitive performance. This relationship was characterized by the term (outsourcing).

The outsourcing strategy, according to international experiences, has strengthened the position of small and medium enterprises as the executing party and provider of the needs of the ordering establishments, its importance was expressed through its integration and qualification to be able to keep pace with the requirements of the major estates.

In most scientific research, even in the field, more emphasis is placed on the advantages offered by outsourcing to the project owners who outsourcing their activities, in terms of achieving competitive, excellence and superiority in institutional performance, with a lack of attention to these advantages when it comes to executing institutions. Based on the above, we try to pose the following problematic: Does the practice of outsourcing activity affect the competitive performance of the executing establishment (SOREMEP) in Tlemcen?

To answer the previous problematic, we propose the following two hypotheses :

- The first main hypothesis (H_a): There is an improvement in the level of competitive performance in the (SOREMEP) establishment after adopting the outsourcing activity, from the point of view of those in charge of it.
- The second main hypothesis (H_b): The competitive performance of the (SOREMEP) establishment is affected by the practice of the outsourcing activity.

To answer this hypothesis, we formulated two statistical sub-hypotheses as follows:

- (H_{b0}): There is no statistically significant effect at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the outsourcing activity of (SOREMEP) establishment on its competitive performance.
- (H_{b1}): There is a statistically significant effect at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the outsourcing activity of (SOREMEP) establishment on its competitive performance.

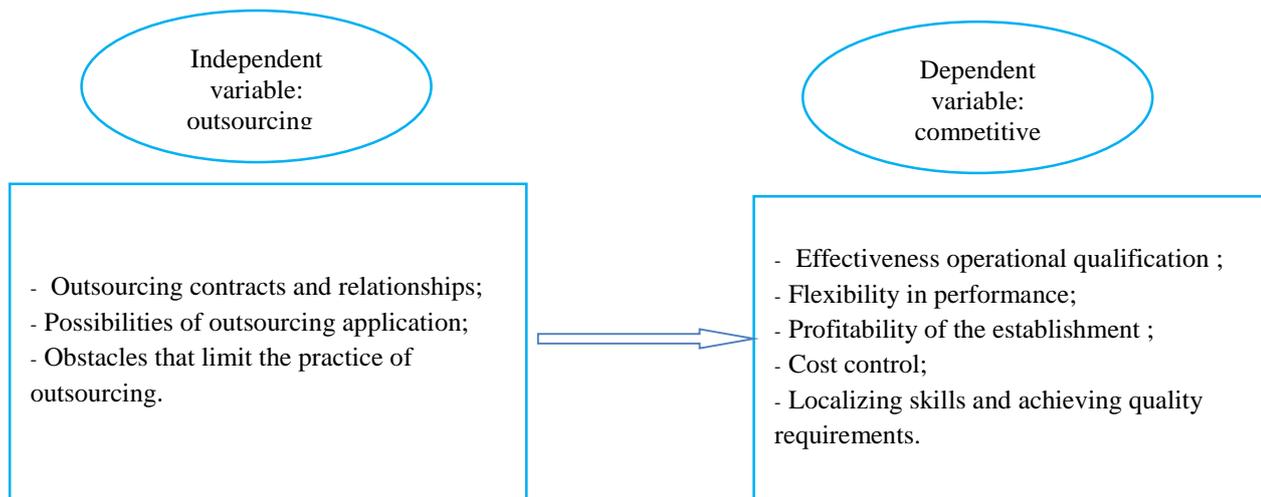
Based on the nature of the topic, we used the descriptive analytical method, which includes two methods, one of which is theoretical, which allows for an accurate description of the phenomenon as it is in reality, and make a qualitative expression for it, based on a review of the previous studies, thus, clarifying the concepts related to the study variables represented in both industrial outsourcing and competitive performance. As for the second method, it was represented in the field study in which we relied on observation and data collection by means of a questionnaire and statistically analyzing it, depending on the Statistical Packages program in Social Sciences (SPSS) to reach a set of results that require a set of suggestions, and thus achieve the objectives of the research.

The study sample is considered random and it included officials of the department and workers in charge of the direction of the outsourcing activity in the establishment

(SOREMEP), and we were able to analyze 30 retrieved questionnaire out of 40 distributed questionnaires, which is equivalent to 75% of the individuals interviewed. The study was conducted from 29/05/2022 to 30/09/2022 with the calculation of the period of retrieval of the questionnaires.

Within the framework of the study hypotheses and the elements of the problem, the general perception of the study model shows its independent and dependent variables through the plan below, which was formulated basing on some previous studies that dealt with the subject of outsourcing activity and competitive performance.

Figure (01): Theoretical Study Model



Source: Prepared by researchers based on the previous studies

1. The theoretical framework of the study

The necessary starting in scientific research is to define and control the concepts of variables, which is represented in our current research in both outsourcing as an independent influential variable and competitive performance as an affected dependent variable, In the following, we try to address them briefly, not exclusively.

1.1. outsourcing in establishments :

Contemporary research has given a great attention to outsourcing issues because of their role in achieving competitive strategic goals in economic establishments. In the following, we provide a summary of outsourcing in establishments.

According to the World Trade Organization, « outsourcing is that relationship organized by a contract between the contractor (the applicant for the service or work) and the external supplier or furnisher, which entitles the contractor to transfer routine, recurring activities to an external supplier when the organization needs to develop expertise and maximize the most valuable activities in the organization's value chain » (World Trade Organization, 2004, p. 266)

In general, outsourcing can be defined as follows: (Yahia, 2013, p. 51)

- Outsourcing is an organizational activity through which supporting functions are transferred to external suppliers or furnishers;
- Outsourcing is a binding agreement or contract between two or more establishments ;
- The contracting establishment is called the project owner establishment ;
- The supplying establishment is called the outsourcing establishment ;
- Technical standards belong to the establishments that own the product or the project;

- The supplying establishment bears any defect in the technical characteristics.

1.1.2. The strategic role of outsourcing in the executing establishments:

Small and medium enterprises benefit from the establishment that owns the project under the contracting system from the perspective of outsourcing by obtaining modern technology to develop their means of production and management methods on the one hand, in addition to providing the appropriate quality and effectiveness to the contracting establishment by virtue of its outsourcing of its activities to specialized bodies and achieving operational efficiency. (ARAB & ALLALI, 2012, p. 11)

1.1.3. Obstacles that limit the practice of outsourcing in the executing establishments :

Executing establishments confront many problems that they must take into account before deciding to enter into an outsourcing relationship. The most prominent of these problems are the following: (Madhuchhanda, K, & Mathew, 2009, p. 422)

- Transfer of knowledge and loss of the advantage of specialization at work.
- Barriers of distance and culture as well as uncertainty regarding time and price;
- Ambiguity in requirements that may change the scope of the project and breach the agreed terms and thus incur additional charges;
- The lack of sufficient information about the establishments wishing to outsourcing their activities.

1.2. competitive performance in the establishments :

The competitive performance is one of the most discussed topics in the research arena since ancient times, as the strategic goal that economic institutions seek to achieve, in the following, we present a simplified introduction about it.

According to Renault, competitive performance is «the process of researching competitive dynamics that allows the analysis and improvement of the company's position in the market» through a set of strategies adopted in the business environment (Ghozlene, 2016, p. 24), while Jack Castelnau notes that «The competitive performance of the organization revolves around the extent to which the organization is able to

Increasing its competitiveness in the markets in which it is located, and that this ability depends on its internal performance (performance of internal functions), and therefore the competitive environment requires identifying the gap between competitors by making continuous comparisons between their performance». from this perspective, the analysis relates to the parity relationship between each degree of competitiveness of the firm and its performance. (TALEB, 2008, p. 119)

1.2.1. Measuring competitive performance Indicators : Competitive performance is analyzed by measuring apparent comparative advantages. It is based on a set of indicators referred to by many economists, such as PORTER, in general, competitive performance is measured by the following indicators:

- a) **Operational Efficiency and Qualification :** Efficiency measures how the outputs interact with the economic and social environment, and the concept of efficiency is greater compared to qualification, as the focus here is on achieving goals and visions at the same time. (Evelina & Ilona, 2013, p. 45)
- b) **Flexibility in performance :** Flexibility expresses the ability to change and adapt to a challenging environment. The degree of response to surrounding changes varies from one organization to another, some are able to adapt quickly, and some are slow to respond, which prompts them to adopt strategic methods that contribute to raising their response rate, among them. It is the outsourcing

that allows the possibility to engage with highly responsive partners and to benefit from their ability to adapt in the face of environmental challenges and obstacles. (Asta, Georgsdottir, & Getz, 2004, p. 166)

- c) **Establishment Profitability** : The first axis to achieve competitive advantages is based on the ability of the establishment to compare the advantages of cost and advantages of excellence. This process is one of the factors that determine the profitability of the enterprise, in addition to the attractiveness of the industry in which it works. Profitability expresses the relationship between the tools used and the results achieved during a specific period, so it is a measure of relative operational qualification. (Bouriche, 2022, p. 199)
- d) **Total Cost Control** : The ability of the establishment to control its costs is one of the most important norms that helps in judging the extent to which it can achieve excellence in its competitive performance, based on the analysis of the various components of expenditures and their classification within reports that allow obtaining administrative information about them, hence, evaluating the performance of the activities from which these expenditures originate and making rational decisions regarding them, which take the form of strategies aimed at reducing and managing these expenses. (MEZHOUD, 2019, p. 102)
- e) **Realizing quality requirements** : According to the International Standards Organization ISO designed to improve the durable performance with meeting everyone's needs «We say about the company's products that they are of quality when they correspond to the requirements of the customer, and they reflect the ability to satisfy implicit and explicit needs» (Bochta & Bouamoucha, 2019, p. 43) and this is done by relying on strategies based on the idea of introducing new products and added marketing programs those aims to expand market shares and maximize the company's position in the competition market. (Robert, Bradley, & Ralph, 1975, p. 06)

2. The experimental framework for the study: the field study at the SOREMEP establishment in Tlemcen :

Through this axis, we try to project the theoretical framework on the ground, by studying the effect of the practice of outsourcing activity in improving competitive performance in the (SOREMEP) establishment in the prefecture of Tlemcen, it requires, as a first step, to provide a clear methodological framework that defines the basic steps and rules to be carried out through the field study.

2.1. Presentation of the establishment and the nature of its outsourcing activity :

The establishment, object of the study, is known as Studies Company and Mineral Applications and it is a public company. Established as part of the Telecommunications Corporation (ENTC), Known by its full foreign name (La Société D'étude Et Réalisations Métalloplastiques), abbreviated as (SOREMEP), it is part of the Algerian Industrial Group (ELEC). It started its activity since its foundation in 2001, specializing in the manufacture of metal equipment furniture in different shapes and uses, such as:

- Metal products such as office furniture and changing rooms, adding shelves and medical furniture;
- Manufacture of elevator doors on demand according to international safety and trust standards;
- Manufacture of metal parts, molds and parts for small metal fasteners;
- Containers, covers and accessories for metal batteries.

Controlling the outsourcing activity of the establishment showed the following results.

Table (01) : Outsourcing Activity In (SOREMEP) Establishment

Workshops	Manufacturing under the product outsourcing
Plastic injection workshop	11 plastic injection machine from 63 to 400 tons
Mechanical Press & Turning Workshop	45 Hydraulic presses (12 to 400 tons), mechanical presses (5 to 250 tons), 93 turneries, 4 drilling machines, 3 filters macines.
design workshop	Shears and two perforating machines, 10 folding machines (25 to 300 tons), from 4 to 8 spot welding machines.
Chemical and thermal treatment workshop	Surface treatment line and thermal treatment furnace.
Sheet Metal Workshop	Two lines for electrostatic paint.
Mechanical machinery workshop	Ternery or turrets and milling machines.

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on documents obtained from the institution under the study.

It is clear from the above table that the establishment under the study was able to contract and enter into partnership with major projects within the framework of the outsourcing relationship to include the various workshops in it, which allowed to expand its market share and penetrate its products to the mechanical markets and the plastics industry. According to the company's reports, it was able, within 16 years, to achieve offers worthy of large companies, which allowed it to consolidate its position in the market by virtue a set of the auxiliary factors, foremost of which is the focus on quality in all its fields of activity, and the exercise of vigilance to monitor the requirements, concerns and complaints of customers.

2.2. The nature of the study tool : The researchers relied on a questionnaire form as an appropriate tool for collecting data and information that achieve the objectives of the current research, an it was judged by specialized professors and its outputs were analyzed using the statistical package program known as SPSS. The questionnaire consisted of two parts:

The first part: includes questions related to the personal informations of the study sample members (gender, age group, educational level, professional experience).

The second part: is divided into two axes, the first is about the outsourcing activity of the establishment, and the second is about its competitive performance.

2.3. Measuring tool of the study : The questionnaire was based on the ordinal scale that determines the possible answers for each statement by sing a three-point graduated Likarte scale to measure statements because it is proportional to the number of views and the number of paragraphs of the questionnaire under the study, where each statement corresponds to a list bearing the following choices: (agree, neutral, disagree) and relative to the weights (1.2.3) respectively.

2.4. Validity and stability of the study tool : To find out the degree of stability of the study tool and the extent of internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha coefficient (CORNBACHS ALPHA) was used. Where the results in the table below indicated that the total stability degree exceeded 90%, which is an excellent result indicating a very high stability of the study tool and therefore it is valid for the purposes of the scientific research and statistical analysis.

Table (02): The stability and validity of the questionnaire

The number of questionnaire statements	Stability degree
17	0.971

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS outputs

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Test of the normal distribution of the study variables : Statistical analysis of the questionnaire requires ensuring that the extracted data follow a normal distribution, and to achieve this, we proceed to the test (K-S) KOLMOGOROV SMIRMOV TEST. The results were as follows:

Table (03) : results of the normal distribution test for the study dimensions

Dimensions	Value(Z)	Probability value(SIG)
Outsourcing activity	0.302	1.000
competitive performance	0.518	0.951
All	0.410	0.975

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS outputs.

Table (03) shows that the total probability value (SIG) of the study variables in both dimensions was greater than ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, we conclude that the data (informations) are subject to a normal distribution. Thus, the possibility of conducting the remaining tests to answer the hypotheses of the study.

3.2. Sample characteristics analysis : The process of statistical analysis of personal and occupational informations (gender, age group, educational level and professional experience) will be presented by addressing the characteristics of the sample and extracting frequencies and percentages.

Table (04): Distribution of the sample members according to the personal information

Personal information	Degree	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Gender	Male	17	56.7%
	Femal	13	43.3%
	Total	30	100%
Age	under 30 years old	01	3.3%
	From 30 to 40 years old	21	70.0%
	From 41 to 50 years old	6	20.0%
	More than 50 years old	2	6.7%
	Total	30	100%
Educational level	Secondary	03	10.0%
	Academic	25	83.3%
	Postgraduate	2	6.7
	Total	30	100%
Professional	Less than 5 years	11	36.7%

experience	From 6 to 10 years	09	30.0%
	More than 10 years	10	33.3%
	Total	30	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS outputs.

The above table shows that the ratio of males and females is very close, which means that employment in the SOREMEMP establishment opens the door for both sexes equally. With males outperforming due to their increasing demand for technical industries and mechanical engineering compared to female turnout. In addition to the nature and requirements of work that require men's capabilities and field outputs that require working outside the prefecture. We also note that the age group between 30 and 40 years has reached 70%, which indicates that the company's staff is dominated by the youth group. In terms of professional experience, the highest percentage of respondents represented by 36.7% have experience of less than 05 years, but this does not prevent the existence of an expert professional balance for the company, which is confirmed by individuals with experience over 10 years reaching 33.3% of individuals. At the educational level, the majority of the respondents, with a percentage of more than 80%, have an academic level, and this indicates the focus of the Applied and Mineral Studies Company on attracting those with academic and knowledge qualifications, to ensure the maximum amount of knowledge needed to carry out the tasks and achieve flexibility with the new competitive and industrial environment.

4. Discussion of Hypotheses :

4.1. The first main Hypothesis : The level of competitive performance in SOREMP establishment improved after adopting the outsourcing activity from the point of view of those in charge of it.

To answer this hypothesis, it is necessary to describe the level of conception of the study variables among the responsables and those in charge of the outsourcing activity at the SOREMEMP establishment, by studying the attitudes of the sample members towards these variables, which we explain as follows :

The information collected from the sample members about studying variables are analyzed using arithmetic averages and deviations, the following tables show the answers of the study sample according to the expressions contained in the questionnaire.

Table (05): The progress of the sample members towards the study variables in the outsourcing axis in (SOREMEMP) corporation.

No.	Expression	Average	Deviation	Result
1	The establishment concludes local outsourcing contracts.	1.966	0.927	NEUTRAL
2	The establishment concludes foreign outsourcing contracts.	1.733	0.868	NEUTRAL
3	The establishment deals within the framework of a outsourcing relationship with large, medium and small enterprises alike.	2.700	0.534	AGREE
4	Ease of finding establishments outsourcing its activities.	2.100	0.803	NEUTRAL
5	Effectiveness of legal legislation related	1.900	0.711	NEUTRAL

	to outsourcing contracts.			
6	Benefit from the direction and support of the National outsourcing Exchange.	2.366	0.764	AGREE
7	Absence of sufficient information about the outsourcing establishments.	2.366	0.718	AGREE
8	Breach of the outsourcing establishments with the agreed terms.	2.200	0.761	NEUTRAL
9	Loss of privacy and confidentiality in performing operations.	2.000	0.870	NEUTRAL

Source: Prepared by the researcher with the help of SPSS results.

Table (06): The direction of the answers in the axis of competitive performance in (SOREMEP) corporation after adopting the outsourcing activity.

No.	Expression	Average	Deviation	Result
1	Achieving the possibility of adapting to the emerging needs in the market.	2.566	0.727	AGREE
2	Achieving operational qualification through optimal and full utilization of available resources.	2.666	0.606	AGREE
3	Reduce the general level of costs to the minimum possible.	2.100	0.758	NEUTRAL
4	The growth of the company's turnover and a positive trend for its profitability returns.	2.100	0.836	NEUTRAL
5	The performance of the workers is effective and directed correctly.	2.300	5.636	NEUTRAL
6	Achieving the required quality by updating the ways to meet customer requirements.	3.400	0.727	AGREE
7	Reduction in complaints produced from customers.	2.566	0.626	AGREE
8	Location of skills, exchange of experiences and technology transfer.	2.400	0.723	AGREE

Source: Prepared by the researcher with the help of SPSS results.

It is clear from the results of the two tables above that the respondents' answers were mostly in a « neutral » direction according to the (LIKART) scale for the outsourcing activity axis, while it moved towards « agree » regarding the competitive performance of (SOREMEP) corporation, and therefore it cannot be confirmed whether the latter was able to activate the practice of outsourcing activity, although the average response of the respondents tended towards « agree » regarding the extent to which the institution deals with small, medium and even large enterprises within the framework of the outsourcing relationships, which obtained the lowest deviation value in the answers (0.534), which means that the sample members agreed to « agree » in this statement, while individuals are more distracted by the establishment's conclusion of local outsourcing contracts, given that its statement recorded the highest value of the standard deviation in relation to the axis of the outsourcing activity, which is equivalent to (0.927), and the deviation of the answers above was (5.636) with regard to the effectiveness of the employees' performance and the extent to which they benefit from the correct direction in the second axis related to competitive performance, the lowest deviation was recorded in the same axis with a value of (0.606) in relation to achieving operational qualification through the optimal and full utilization of available resources. This dispersion indicates that the direction of the

respondents' opinion is not homogeneous, this means that the descriptive statistics measures are not able to describe the respondents' directions about the practice of SOREMP outsourcing activity and the extent of its contribution to improving its competitive performance. that prompts us to resort to more accurate statistical methods such as simple regression analysis of the effect of the independent study variable (outsourcing) on the dependent variable (competitive performance).

4.2- The second main hypothesis: The competitive performance of SOREMEP establishment is affected by the practice of outsourcing activity.

- First sub-hypothesis (H0): There is no statistically significant effect at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the outsourcing activity of (SOREMEP) establishment on its competitive performance.

- The second sub-hypothesis (H1): There is a statistically significant effect at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the practice of outsourcing activity of (SOREMEP) establishment on its competitive performance.

In order to test this hypothesis, it is necessary to ensure the validity of the model for this by conducting an analysis of variance test for regression (ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE).

Table (07) : results of the total regression analysis of variance to verify the validity of the model.

Variance source	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Average squares	Value (F)	Significance Level (F)
Regression	41.006	1	41.006	50.531	0.000
Error	4.869	29	0.167		
Total	45.875	30			

Statistically significant at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$)

Source : Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS outputs.

Through the table (07), we notice that the level of significance (F) is equal to 0.000 * so is less than the level of significance of 5%, and from it the model is valid for testing this hypothesis.

The outsourcing activity in the current study is determined by expressions that express the following dimensions (Contracts and relationships of outsourcing, possibilities of applying outsourcing and obstacles that limit the practice of this activity) in the form of a single independent variable, we study its impact on competitive performance as a dependent variable defined by the following indicators and expressions (Operational effectiveness and efficiency, flexibility in performance, profitability of the establishment, cost control, location of skills and achieving quality requirements). Through a simple regression analysis test, the results are shown as follows:

Table (08) : Results of simple regression analysis of the effect of outsourcing on improving competitive performance in (SOREMEP) establishment.

Modele	correlation coefficient (R)	coefficient of determination (R- two)	Ajusted determination coefficient (R-two ajusted)	Estimated error ERROR-standard estimate)
1	0,945 ^a	0.894	0.876	0.900
	Non-standardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients		

	coefficients	standard error	Bêta	Arithmetic T	Significance level
(Constant)	0.179	0.702	-	0.254	0.808
Practice of the outsourcing activity	0.988	0.139	0.945	7.108	0.000
Equation	$Y = B_0 + B_1X$				
ε Standard error	$Y = 0.179 + 0.988x + \varepsilon$				
Tabular T = 2.045 at 5% significance level and degree of freedom (n-1) = 29					

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS outputs.

We note from the table that the correlation coefficient (PEARSON) is equal to 0.945, which is more than 90%, which means that there is a strong positive correlation between the practice of outsourcing activity and the improvement of competitive performance levels. The coefficient of determination is 0.894, which explains the value of 89% of the change in the outsourcing activity variable, as for the calculated T value, it was estimated at: 7.108, which is greater than the tabular T value, which we read in the (STUDENT) table at a degree of freedom (29) = 2.045, we also note that the significance level is equal to (0.000), which is less than the significance value of 5%, thus we accept the existence hypothesis H1 and reject the null hypothesis OH, from it, we conclude that there is a statistically significant effect of the outsourcing activity on improving the levels of competitive performance in the SOREMEP establishment.

5. CONCLUSION

At the conclusion of our study, it can be said that the establishment under study included the outsourcing method within its main activities as a result of the structural change in the industrial field, and the initiatives for the rehabilitation of small and medium companies. Within the framework of establishing a network of relations between the different production units, allowing the adoption of an effective industrial strategy that develops the local industrial fabric.

However, this does not negate the existence of structural and organizational obstacles related to the lack of sufficient awareness of the mechanisms for implementing this strategy. We have concluded a set of results, which are as follows:

The theoretical side results :

- Outsourcing enables the executing establishments to achieve a kind of specialization that allows them to reach higher levels of effectiveness and qualification.
- Outsourcing provides the possibility of exchanging knowledge and benefiting from experiences and managerial skills, marketing as well as operational skills.

Practical side results :

- SOREMEP establishment adopts the activity of outsourcing at a good level, as it has the capabilities to develop this activity in order to enhance its competitive forces and support its market shares.

- Those in charge of the outsourcing activity in the establishment under the study possess a good knowledge base regarding the mechanisms of implementing this activity and directing it correctly towards improving the establishment's performance and competitiveness.
- SOREMEP's dealings with large, small and medium enterprises contribute to the consolidation of their relations up to the outsourcing method.
- Statistically, the indicators of competitive performance growth are affected by the outsourcing activity in the SOREMEP establishment, which means that practicing this activity enabled it to achieve operational efficiency, through the optimal use of its capabilities and thus achieving good levels of capital and workers.
- The outsourcing relations encouraged SOREMEP establishment to reach the required quality according to international standards, in a way that supports its competitive performance.
- The outsourcing activity of the SOREMEP establishment faces obstacles, related to the absence of sufficient information about the establishments wishing to outsource their activities, and the nature of the needs of these establishments.

Recommendations and Suggestions : Through applied study and field observations, the study recommends the study recommends:

- The necessity of increasing the establishment's interest in developing its relationship with project owners and introducing its services and operational capabilities, through its participation in several national and foreign events and demonstrations, which may allow it to be promoted and its activities.
- The use of decision models that allow it to choose the right project owners to sell its products.

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