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A theorical model of mandatory use of e-government system adoption: factors afecting digital notarial system

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Abstract

Even though all government around the world are investing a lot of a lot of efforts and money in E-government initiatives, the adoption factors of such systems doesn't seem to be studied enough from the researchers. Without a good adoption by users, the E-government investment is jeopardized. Through studying the Digital Notarial system in Albania, we build a new model for user adoption of E-government technologies. Technology adoption is one of the most mature area in Information Systems (IS) research. Since voluntary use is the main context of these researches, they are focus in predicting system Use and Behavior Intention as the direct predictor of usage. Because the use of Digital Notary is not voluntary, but instead is mandatory, we argue that the Behavior Intention and system use are not the appropriate variables to be measured as the success of adoption. Instead User Satisfaction is an appropriate measure in the mandatory use. Using previous research work, this article will identify the determinants' constructs and their relationship to the adoption of Digital Notarial system in Albania. Finally, a theoretical framework for private professionals' adoption model of mandatory E-government Information Systems will be proposed.

***Keywords**: E-government, Technology adoption, Notarial System, Albania, Mandatory use.*

1. Introduction

Notarial service plays a very important role in the well-functioning of modern countries. Either directly or indirectly, it serves to respond to government, businesses and citizens' demands. Considering life dynamics, at a certain point in life almost everybody will have to get notarial services like: business contracts, power of attorney, real estate purchase, attestations, Credit Loans, different types of written declarations, company statutes, testaments, etc., especially in those countries which are operating under the Civil Low. Notarial Service range is only getting bigger as legislation of countries gets more complex and the free movement of people, services and goods are promoted between countries and regions through the world.

Basically there are two main types of notaries in the world: 1) Common-Law notaries (i.e. public notaries), like in United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, etc. and 2) Civil-law notaries, like in most of European countries, Latin America, etc. The notaries in Civil-Law are basically well trained, government licensed private professionals (Malavet, 1995). In comparison to Common Law notaries, Civil-Law notaries have more legal power. Albanian notarial service is part of the Civil-Law type. This means that notaries in Albania have very strong legal power (similar to judge decisions) and they effect many aspect of businesses' and individuals' life. Many legal services are monopoly to the notaries.

As all other service businesses, the notarial service has to be adapted to the digital era and its challenges. In Albania, the notarial service has been part of the national strategies and objectives for the digitalization of services they offer to citizens, businesses, governmental institutions and third parties.

In view of Albania's European integration agenda, a great emphasis is put on automation and ICT as a mean to provide more effective services to the population as well as to fight corruption. Nevertheless, the adoptions, effectiveness and efficiency of e-government services in Albania are still a critical issue, upon which neither the government nor the private actors have invested enough time or efforts to monitor and measure. Thus, it is a necessity for all the e-government services to be critically discussed, systematically measured and monitored thought unbiased methodology. As a response to this challenge the study will try to identify the determinants of the adoption and use of Digital Notarial Service in Albania and propose an adapted theoretical framework for private professionals' adoption model of mandatory E-government Information Systems.

A major distinction between E-government and other online technologies such as e-commerce, is that the use of certain E-government technologies

is mandatory, rather than voluntary (Warkentin, Gefen, Pavlou, & Rose, 2002). Digital Notarial is a very good example of a mandatory E-government technology in which the notaries are required by law to use the system and digitally archive the legal documents they produce as well as their transactions. While prior research has been focused primarily on voluntary technology-based in consumer context, this work focuses especially in mandatory e-government services context.

This study firstly makes a short introduction of E-government. Then a review of the most well-known Information System (IS) adoption models in individual level will be presented. A detailed elaboration of Mandatory use is done. Next, by using previous research work done we will identify the determinants' constructs and their relationship to the Digital Notarial system adoption and build our conceptual adoption model.

2. E-government and Digital Notarial

E-government is the use of ICT and its application by the government for the provision of information and public services to the people (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affair, 2014). E-government is described as the use of technology to enhance access to, and delivery of, government services to benefit citizens, business partners and employees at local, municipal, state and national levels (Grant & Chau, 2005). E-government includes electronic interactions of three types—i.e. government-to-government (G2G); government-to-business (G2B); and government-to-consumer (G2C). Digital Notarial system is a governmental service, despite the fact that it is offered by private professionals. Thereof this study will be focused on the perspective of E-government. We will study the factors that explain the system adoption of Digital Notarial system by the end users. The end users of this system are notaries, trained private professionals licensed by government.

E-government implementation can significantly increase benefits like improved efficiencies, greater access to services, greater accountability, transparency and citizen empowerment, lowered costs and time for services, improved interactions with citizens, other government organizations, businesses and industry, better relationships between government and private sector (Gupta, Dasgupta, & Gupta, 2008). Increased use of E-government by citizens also lead to increased trust in local government and also in positive attitudes towards E-government processes. In contrast to traditional government processes, e-Government is notably characterized by (a) the extensive use of communication technology, (b) the impersonal nature of the online environment, (c) the ease by which in formation

can be collected, processed (data-mined), and used by multiple parties, and (d) the newness of the communication medium (Warkentin, Gefen, Pavlou, & Rose, 2002).

Government of Albania has implemented Digital Notarial system for the first time only in 2012, as part of the Digital Albania Initiative. This system was disruptive to the way the notaries used to work and comply with legal requirements. They had to switch from 100% manual work to a digital system where the use was mandatory. Every notary was given access to the Digital Notary system where they have to register all their daily transactions and archive all the legal documents they produce. By using this system they have to communicate with some other governmental institution in order to get documents to offer specific services to the citizens.

3. Existing Models of Technology adoption

Technology adoption is one of the most mature area in Information Systems (IS) research and a lot of models are developed for this purpose. These models are grouped in two types: 1) Technology adoption models in firm level like DOI (Rogers, 1995) and the TOE framework (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990), etc. and 2) Technology adoption models in individual level (detailed below) like TRA, TAM, TAM2, TPB, UTATUT, etc.. Because end users of Digital Notarial are individuals (notaries), then we will study the adoption from the individual level.

There are many models developed that try to explain the individual adoption of IS. This study is interested only in theories about technology adoption, with special focus on those adapted for workplace environments.

The most used theories of technology acceptance model in individual level are the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), Motivational Model (MM) (F. D. Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985, 1991), Decomposed Theory of Planned behavior (Taylor & Todd, 1995b), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (F. Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989; F. D. Davis, 1989), Task Technology Fit (TTF) (Goodhue & Thompson, 1995), Technology Acceptance Model 2 (TAM2) (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000), Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003), Technology Acceptance Model 3 (TAM3) (Venkatesh & Bala, 2008), Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2) (Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu, 2012).

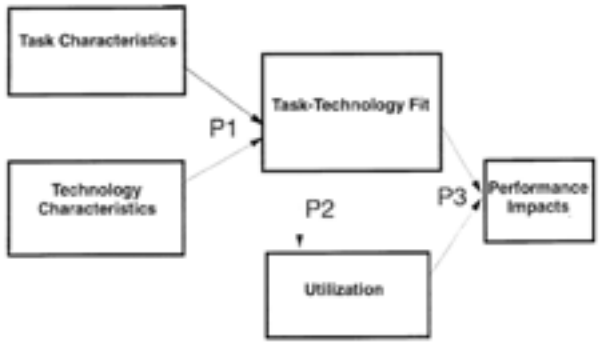
TABLE 1: Theories of individual acceptance

Model/theory	Core constructs	Source(s)
Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)	Attitude toward Behavior (AT) Subjective Norm (SN)	*(Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)*
Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	Perceived Usefulness (PU) Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	*(F. Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989; F. D. Davis, 1989)*
Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)	Attitude toward Behavior (AT) Subjective Norm (SN)	Adapted from TRA
	Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	*(Ajzen, 1991)*
Decomposed Theory of Planned Behavior (DTPB)	Attitude toward Behavior (AT)	Adapted from TRA/TAM
	Subjective Norm (SN)	Adapted from TPB
	Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	Adapted from TPB
	Perceived Usefulness (PU) Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	Adapted from TAM
	Compatibility (COMP) Resource Facilitating Conditions (RFC) Technology Facilitating Conditions (TFC)	*(Taylor & Todd, 1995a)*
	Self-Efficacy (SE)	*(Compeau & Higgins, 1995; Taylor & Todd, 1995a)*
Task Technology Fit	Task Characteristics Task Characteristics Task-Technology fit Utilization Individual Performance	*(Goodhue & Thompson, 1995)*
Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)	Output Expectation - Personal (OEPR) Output Expectation - Professional (OEPL) Self-Efficacy (SE) Affect (AFT) Anxiety (ANX)	*(Compeau & Higgins, 1995)*
Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT)	Relative Advantage (RA) Compatibility (COMP) Image (IMG) Trialability (TRB) Visibility (VSB)	*(Moore & Benbasat, 1991; Rogers, 1995)*
	Ease of Use (EOU)	*(F. Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989; F. D. Davis, 1989; Moore & Benbasat, 1991; Rogers, 1995)*
	Result Demonstrability (RD)	*(Moore & Benbasat, 1991; Rogers, 1995)*
	Voluntariness of Use (VU)	*(Moore & Benbasat, 1991)*
Extended TAM (TAM2)	Image (IMG)	*(Moore & Benbasat, 1991; Rogers, 1995; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000)*
	Perceived Usefulness (PU) Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	Adapted from TAM
	Job Relevance (JR)	*(Venkatesh & Davis, 2000)*
	Result Demonstrability (RD)	*(Moore & Benbasat, 1991; Rogers, 1995; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000)*
	Subjective Norm (SN)	Adapted from TRA/TPB
IS Success Model (ISSM)	Information Quality (IQ) System Quality (SYQ) Service Quality (SVQ) User Satisfaction (USTS)	*(Delone & McLean, 2003)*
	USE Net Benefit (NB)	
Diffusion of Innovation (DOI)	Relative Advantage (RA) Compatibility (COMP)	*(Moore & Benbasat, 1991; Rogers, 1995)*
	Complexity (CLX)	*(Rogers, 1995)*
Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)	Performance Expectancy (PE) Effort Expectancy (EE) Social Influence (SI) Facilitating Conditions (FC)	*(Venkatesh et al., 2003)*

Source: Author

In this article we will conceptualize our adoption model by extending the UTAT model with Task-Technology Fit.

FIGURE 1: Task-Technology Fit and Individual Performance



Source: (Goodhue & Thompson, 1995)

At the center of this model is the assertion that for an information technology to have a positive impact on individual performance, the technology: (1) must be utilized and (2) must be a good fit with the tasks it supports (Goodhue & Thompson, 1995). This model highlights the importance of the fit between technologies and users' tasks in achieving individual performance impacts from information technology. It also suggests that task-technology fit, when decomposed into its more detailed components, could be the basis for a strong diagnostic tool to evaluate whether information systems and services in a given organization are meeting user needs.

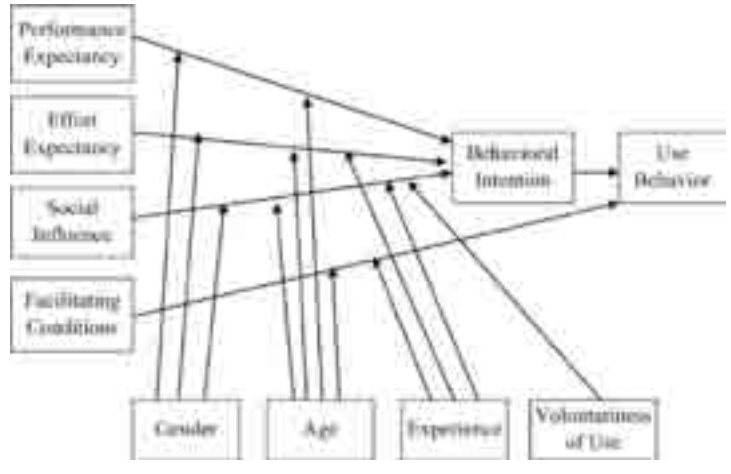
TTF argues that a user will only adopt an information technology when it fits his/ her tasks at hand and improves his/her performance ((Goodhue & Thompson, 1995). Since its inception, TTF has been widely used and combined with other models such as TAM to explain user adoption of an information technology (Dishaw & Strong, 1999). Recently, TTF has been applied to explain user adoption of emerging Internet services such as mobile technologies, blogs, etc.

4. Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003)

Venkatesh et al. (2003) attempted to review and compare the existing user acceptance models with an ultimate goal to develop a unified theory of technology acceptance by integrating every determinants of user acceptance that was evaluated as important by their longitudinal study. This new model conceptualized and tested was named Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT).

The eight original models and theories of individual acceptance that were integrated by (Venkatesh et al., 2003) include the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Motivational Model (MM), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Model Combining the Technology Acceptance Model and Theory of Planned Behavior (C-TAM-TPB), Model of PC Utilization (MPCU), Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). Summary of this models and their constructs are listed below.

FIGURE 2: Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)



Source: (Venkatesh et al., 2003)

Longitudinal field studies were conducted across heterogeneous contexts. The reliability and validity of each construct from every model were measured. For the new research model, seven constructs appeared to be significant and directly determined the intention of information technology usage. These seven constructs are:

1. Performance expectancy: the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular system would improve his or her job performance;
2. Effort expectancy: the degree of simplicity associated with the use of a particular system;
3. Attitude toward using technology: the degree to which an individual believes he or she should use a particular system;
4. Social influence: the degree to which an individual perceives that others believe he or she should use a particular system;
5. Facilitating conditions: the degree to which an individual believes that an organizational and technical infrastructure exists to support the use of a particular system;

6. Self-efficacy: the degree to which an individual judges his or her ability to use a particular system to accomplish a particular job or task;
7. Anxiety: the degree of anxious or emotional reactions associated with the use of a particular system.

5. Mandatory Use of IS

A crucial differentiating point in building an adoption model that fits Digital Notarial use is the concept of mandatory use. This concept makes a huge distinction in the logic and results of existing adoption models literature. Most existing technology adoption models deal with Voluntary use of information systems. Missing this concept in the model makes the results of many researches in the field to be contradictory. Because mandatory use is a key point in this paper's work, a more detailed explanation will be detailed below.

A voluntary use environment is one in which users perceive the technology adoption or use decision to be a choice; a mandated environment is where users perceive use to be organizationally compulsory (Hartwick & Barki, 1994; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). While seemingly a clear distinction, a number of issues surrounding the notion of mandatory vs. volitional usage behavior have been raised in the literature. Some research suggests that there is a continuum of voluntariness (e.g. compulsory (Hartwick & Barki, 1994; Moore & Benbasat, 1991), such that a given adoption decision may seem more or less voluntary to the users. Even on the same system settings users can have variable perception of voluntariness. According to (Hartwick & Barki, 1994), even in mandatory use, usage behaviour is variable because employees can vary their extent of use. In mandatory environment, the system use is highly integrated across job functions, more then to the behaviour intentions.

A voluntary use environment is one in which users perceive the technology adoption or use decision to be a choice; a mandated environment is where users perceive use to be organizationally compulsory (Hartwick & Barki, 1994; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Instead, "A mandatory use environment is defined here as one in which users are required to use a specific technology or system in order to keep and perform their jobs" (Brown, Massey, Montoya-Weiss, & Burkman, 2002, p. 283). The user must use the system, regardless of whether he or she intends to use it. This is in contrast to the volitional usage behavior studied by most TAM research. Mandatory use was considered a probable cause for mixed findings in TAM studies (Hartwick & Barki, 1994; Taylor & Todd, 1995b; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). While seemingly a clear distinction, a number of issues surrounding the notion of mandatory vs. volitional usage behaviour have been raised in the

literature. Some research suggests that there is a continuum of voluntariness (e.g. compulsory (Hartwick & Barki, 1994; Moore & Benbasat, 1991), such that a given adoption decision may seem more or less voluntary to the users. Even on the same system settings users can have variable perception of voluntariness. According to Hartwick & Barki (1994), even in mandatory use, usage behaviour is variable because employees can vary their extent of use. In mandatory environment, the system use is highly integrated across job functions, more then to the behaviour intentions.

There have been efforts to modify the TAM to address mandatory use of software. Because the intention to use has been the central construct in the model the researchers have a strong tendency to use it in their models for mandatory use too. The paradox here is that, if a user is required to use a system, their intention to use is not likely to be relevant (Brown, Massey, Montoya-Weiss, & Burkman, 2002).

Two approaches are used to apply TAM in mandatory use. First, some researchers used the same model to study both mandatory and volitional systems (e.g., (Brown, Massey, Montoya-Weiss, & Burkman, 2002; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; Venkatesh et al., 2003). In those research the voluntariness was modeled as a moderator of the relationship between intention and determinants of intention (e.g. (Venkatesh et al., 2003)). This was the approach used by the TAM2 and TAM3. In Venkatesh et al. (2003) study, voluntariness was only found to have significant moderation effect when it interacted with three or four other moderators simultaneously. This added complexity in interpreting the moderation effect and the exact role voluntariness played in the model.

The second approach used by researchers was to reintroduce the attitude construct that was in the earlier versions of the TAM but has removed during the evolution of the model. Attitude is an "individual's positive or negative feelings (evaluative effect) about performing the target behavior" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p. 216). In the original TAM, attitude toward using the system was modeled to predict behavior directly (F. D. Davis, 1989) and to mediate the influence of perceived usefulness and perceived ease-of-use. Over time, intention was introduced and studies conducted in volitional environments showed that the explanatory power of the model was equally good with attitude removed. For the sake of parsimony, attitude was removed in later versions of the TAM, including the Parsimonious TAM, UTAUT, TAM2, and TAM3. As researchers broadened the contexts of system use in TAM studies, the importance of attitude resurfaced. Attitude was found to be a significant predictor of continuance intention. As for mandatory use, arguments have been advanced that the removal of attitude causes an inaccurate representation of the phenomenon (Brown, Massey, Montoya-Weiss, & Burkman, 2002). Since captive users must use the system regardless of their intention, the linkage between intention and use and that between attitude and intention are

broken ((Brown, Massey, Montoya-Weiss, & Burkman, 2002; Yousafzai, Foxall, & Pallister, 2007). With no option but to use the system, displeased users have to cope with cognitive dissonance by altering their attitude toward the system mentally (Rawstorne, Jayasuriya, & Caputi, 1998). Employees' satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with their use of system reflects the extent to which these functions adequately (or inadequately) fulfill their work needs. Employees are dissatisfied when these functions fail to support their service activities. Thus, in a mandatory setting, intention is not appropriate for assessing their mental acceptance of the system (Nah, Tan, & Teh, 2004). For these reasons, models of mandatory use of software should include attitude as a key construct (Brown, Massey, Montoya-Weiss, & Burkman, 2002).

A fundamental difference between a mandatory and a volitional system is the organizational consequences that system use carries for the user. For the former, system use is mandated based on the organization's aims and objectives. Users are obliged to use the system because that is the only way of accomplishing their daily tasks. Performance considerations surrounding the use of the system often are the users' main concern (Taylor & Todd, 1995b). They can lead to reward or punishment for the user. Hence, a user's attitude toward use highly depends on whether he or she believes that such use will enhance his or her job performance, i.e., performance expectancy of the system.

A user of a mandatory system also can differ substantially from a volitional user in terms of his or her social environment of use, whereas mandatory systems often are used for tasks that are tightly coupled with other users' tasks (Nah et al., 2004). A user of a mandatory system cannot avoid paying attention to his or her supervisors' and peers' opinions about using the system, so it is more under the influence of the "subjective norm". Subjective norm is defined as a "person's perception that most people who are important to him think he should or should not perform the behavior in question" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p. 302)developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen (1975, 1980. It is part of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), on which the TAM was based.

For system use in mandatory environments, some researchers suggested the removal of use from the model because a captive user must use the system ((Nah, Tan, & Teh, 2004; Rawstorne, Jayasuriya, & Caputi, 1998). In mandatory environments, even if a user mentally rejects a mandatory system, he or she is prohibited from refuse to use. The user, however, may underutilize or sabotage the system ((Brown, Massey, Montoya-Weiss, & Burkman, 2002).

User attitude toward system use has been associated with user satisfaction ((Delone & McLean, 2003). Attitude can become a predisposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to a stimulus (in this case, the system). A positive attitude is more likely to lead to the feeling of satisfaction with the system.

6. User Satisfaction

The success adoption of technology, in mandatory environments, is user satisfaction, instead of behavioral intention. Delone & McLean (1992) suggest that user satisfaction is probably the most widely used single measure of IS success. User satisfaction (US) is the ultimate depended variable we want to predict in our model of mandated user adoption of technology.

User satisfaction (US) is an accumulative experience based evaluation developed over time and represents users' overall affective and cognitive assessment of the entire IS user experience (Au, Ngai, & Cheng, 2008).

For mandatory systems, users' satisfaction with the system is a more useful measure, especially when evaluating an individual system (as opposed to an IS program) (DeLone & McLean, 1992). Overall satisfaction is often included in studies of mandatory environments as a mediator or dependent variable. This satisfaction construct is applied to the system as a whole. In contrast, "characteristics-based" satisfaction is directed toward certain characteristics within the system (Wixom & Todd, 2005). Since system/information satisfaction may be based on an arbitrary set of characteristics (Wixom & Todd, 2005), having an overall satisfaction construct also provides the benefit of a more general, higher level measure of satisfaction.

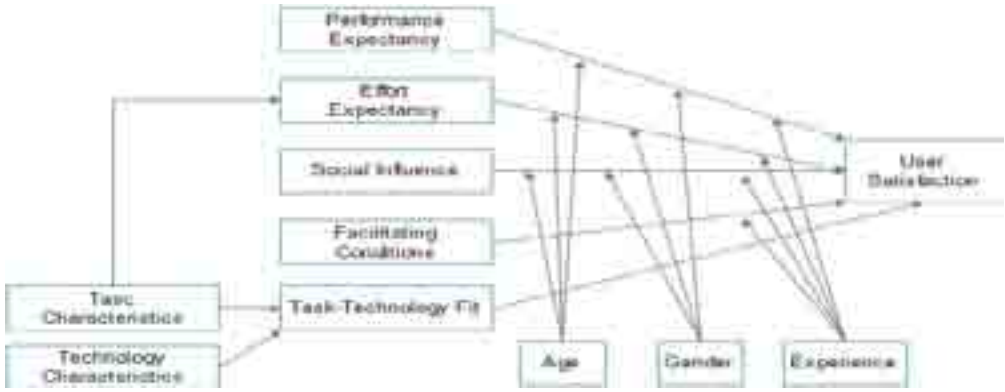
7. Model Development and conclusions

In order to develop our model, we review the UTAUT and TTF, the list of their constructs their theorized relationships. UTAUT is the most well-known adoption model in work environment. There are thousands of articles that applied or extended it in many different context, populations, and technologies.

Task-Technology Fit model is focused on a very crucial part of technology, the fit between technology and user needs. A system that fits the user needs will increase the user satisfaction. A good task technology fit will promote user adoption and satisfaction of Digital Notarial. In contrast, a poor task technology fit will decrease users' satisfaction.

Combining the above models, seems a very logical way of achieving a higher exploratory power of user adoption of Digital Notarial then using each of them separately. Figure 2 represent the conceptual model of Mandatory E-government Digital Notarial.

FIGURE 2: Research model of Mandatory E-government Digital Notarial



Source: Author

The research model conceptualized in Figure 2 need be tested through real data from users of Digital Notarial system in Albania. For distributing the questionnaire to the notaries of Albania, an agreement is already done with the Albanian National Chamber of Notaries. The questionnaire is under development and after a pre-test with a small group of notaries, it will be available online and the link will be send by email to all the notaries. Adoption of Digital Notarial system in Albania needs to be critically discussed, systematically measured and monitored thought unbiased methodology. A major distinction between E-government and other online business technologies, is that the use of certain E-government technologies is mandatory, rather than voluntary. Digital Notarial is an E-government system that its use is mandatory from the notaries. The existing models of adoption doesn't fully apply to this situation and a new model needs to be developed and tested. The model developed in this study defines the factors that especially affect the adoption of notaries to the Digital Notarial system under the mandatory environment. The full analysis and conclusions of the research will be presented in a next paper.

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A theoretical and empirical approach in the restaurant sector

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Abstract

This study is based on the literature review of the tourism industry in the world and in Albania with a main focus on the restaurant service offer. The restaurant sector has experienced different challenges in the last decades in Albania since the creation of the market economy. It is an important sector that may significantly impact the tourism industry. This article aims to offer some important theoretical and empirical evidence from the existing literature related to the marketing practices, service quality and customer satisfaction in the restaurant business. It wants to assess the marketing means used by the restaurants in Albania. Based on the review of the literature, a semi structured questionnaire was created. The questionnaire aims to offer a critical assessment of the restaurant sector from the management point of view. The study gives data and figures of the actual situation of tourism in the world and in Albania in order to offer a realistic look of the present situation. The data from the semi structured questionnaires showed that marketing is considered as a significant element in the restaurant business and important on keeping actual customers and gaining new ones but marketing procedures are not properly and empirically used and assessed by practitioners. Based on the findings, there are given some recommendations for practitioners and researchers.

Key words: *Restaurant sector, Service quality, Satisfaction*

1. Introduction

Tourism industry has been considered an important economic driver for many countries. More people are travelling abroad despite the troubles that the world has experienced during the last years. This fact has been supported by the data of