

BARRIERS TO ADOPTION OF E-COMMERCE IN SMEs IN TRANSITION ECONOMIES – CASE OF ALBANIA

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Abstract:

Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) can benefit significantly from investments in e-commerce and e-business. However, the adoption of e-commerce has been quite slow and limited among SMEs, especially in transition economies. Interviews were conducted with senior managers from 30 medium-sized enterprises in a transition economy- Albania, three from each of the ten key sectors, namely, information and communication technology (ICT), tourism, banking, financial services, agriculture, healthcare, logistics, manufacturing, construction, and retailing. The qualitative data coded from the in-depth interviews was analysed using NVivo® for identifying key themes. Four key themes were identified along with ten subthemes. The key themes identified from the analysis of the data include resource constraints, external environmental factors, organizational issues, resistance to acceptance of new technology. The findings of this study will help the organizational leadership of SMEs in transition economies identify measures to address and resolve the barriers to adoption of e-commerce. This study also adds value to the limited literature on barriers to e-commerce adoption in the context of SMEs in transition economies. The study offers insights on e-commerce adoption by SMEs which can be applied to other transition and emerging economies attempting to understand the barriers that might hinder the adoption of e-commerce by the SMEs.

Keywords: barriers, e-commerce, e-business, challenges, transition, Albania