

EMPOWERING CONSUMERS: UNDERSTANDING AND EXERCISING RIGHTS

Iris Manastirliu¹
irismanastirliu@gmail.com

Abstract

This research paper link the economic growth and Consumers rights. Empowering consumers through understanding and exercising their rights leads to increased consumer confidence, market efficiency, competition, improved business practices, reduced market failures, and a legal and regulatory framework. Empowered consumers feel more confident in their purchasing decisions, leading to higher spending and economic growth. They also hold companies accountable for unethical practices, promoting quality, transparency, and customer service. This balance between consumer rights and business operations fosters trust and long-term economic stability, involves being aware of their legal rights in the marketplace. Empowered consumers also demand higher-quality products, leading to more competition and new technologies, driving economic growth, creates a virtuous cycle where improved confidence, competition, and innovation feed into stronger economic performance.

Transparency in the marketplace ensures consumers have access to relevant information, building trust and encouraging innovation. This creates a virtuous cycle of improved confidence, competition, and innovation to protect themselves and ensure businesses operate fairly and transparently, thereby promoting a more transparent and fair business environment.

At the end the research paper highlights that economic growth is strong related with the consumer rights. Legal transparency is vital for consumer rights, enabling informed decision-making, accountability, trust, protection against abuse, and access to remedies. It promotes better business-consumer relationships, accountability, and access to consumer protection agencies.

Keywords: consumer, customer service, public rights, legal transparency, efficiency.

Introduction

In the social perspective, this paper will analyze the consumer's rights throw digital banking service, as a service that offers convenience, access, cost savings, efficiency, security, and flexibility. Service that eliminates the need to visit branches physically, expanding access to individuals, public and private entities with the aim of reducing the costs associated with traditional banking services. This system also simplifies processes such as account management, bill payment and fund transfers, reducing manual intervention enabling people to save, borrow, invest, and transact securely. Advances in encryption and authentication technologies have made digital transactions

¹ Doctoral Student, „Aleksandër Moisiu“ University of Durrës, Albania, ORCID: 0009-0009-2782-7626.

increasingly secure. This rapid innovation in the digital finance industry can have a positive environmental impact by reducing paper consumption and carbon emissions associated with transportation. In addition, e-banking enables family members to closely monitor the financial activities of their elderly relatives, increasing security and protection. So, e-banking raises security concerns, especially for less tech-savvy members, and educating them on online security measures is essential. E-banking may exacerbate the digital divide between younger and older generations, requiring help from older members but it is essential that this generation is also empowered to manage their finances independently. Managing these challenges is essential for everyone to benefit from digital financial services. Users can customize their experience, access additional services beyond traditional banking, and many e-banking platforms incorporate accessibility features to accommodate users with disabilities. It involves setting up an account, tracking income sources, categorizing income, setting up automatic transfers, budgeting, and planning, regularly monitoring, using additional features like bill pay and mobile check deposit, and prioritizing security.

Digital Fintech and digital services are closely related, focusing on improving and automating financial services like payments, lending, investing, and wealth management. Digital services, including online banking, mobile payment apps, investment platforms, and digital wallets, are delivered electronically, enhancing user experiences, and reaching a wider customer base. Regular monitoring helps identify discrepancies and opportunities for improvement, effectively manage income and achieve financial goals.

In conclusion, the results of this scientific study present that the identification of opportunities for improving digital services helps in the effective management of income and the achievement of financial goals, not only for individuals but also for the public and private sector, against the planned or expected results.

Literature review

The Albanian economy continues to remain mainly cash and this situation does not offer easy access to payment services. Making an infrastructure for communication and interoperability is the main challenge for the financial system, but it can also bring about changes in financial services. The year 2013 is a very important year in terms of the formation of the legal infrastructure of electronic payments. In this year, law 133/2013 dated 29.04.2013 „On the system of payments“. Its purpose was to create the appropriate spaces for the promotion of initiative private for creating the necessary infrastructures in the local market of card payments. Davis and Werther (2010, p. 164) noted that training prepares people to do reviews of their current work and development prepares the employee's knowledge, skills and attitude necessary“. In other words, training is an essential tool for an organization to satisfy the growing demand for contemporary knowledge and skills of employees. With increasing confidence in skills of employees through effective training, human resource managers help employees to

perform their duties without any stress (Mangkunegara Waris, 2015). Some previous studies have empirically proved a positive and strong relationship between training and employee motivation (eg, Hughes et al., 2018; Jaworski et al., 2018; Sahinidis; Bouris, 2008).

Electronic government is considered a powerful instrument to achieve reforms in public management. Significantly, it is essential to the managerial culture in the public sector is supported, which shows efficiency and (Antonio Cordella Federico Iannacci, 2010).

Information Technology has become a solution for the implementation of information flows for make the process efficient and transparent. Of course, it is explained by governance models electronic development, stages, etc. The United Nations has recommended the development of „e-governance“ which aims to develop Information Technology. The effect of technology on public sector has come from various studies, research and projects (Antonio Cordella Federico Iannacci, 2010).

Finally, the effects of technology, the study of the public sector are related to political, social of electronic government projects. Technology affects the governance framework, which provides the relationship between organizations and technology. Thus, technology plays a vital role in the study and implementation of the public sector (Antonio Cordella Federico Iannacci, 2010).

How can Albania benefit by using new technologies in the fight against informality in the economy? According to the OECD study about the informal economy in Albania, it was emphasized that „the challenge of Albania is how to move to a more superior level of balance, without compromising vitality of the sector of entrepreneurs and without penalizing family consumers, eliminating unfair competition and without reducing the overall level of competition in economy“, as „a high level of fiscal evasion translates into a high level of competition dishonest and in distortions of operations related to the markets“.

Methodology and data

Direct methods are methods that attempt to directly detect economic agents operating in the informal economy, rather than indirect signs of informal activity. They are approaches at the micro level that include surveys and samples with voluntary participation or audit taxes and other methods of compliance.

The activity of the informal economy has become a part of existence all over the world. most of societies try to control it through punishment, economic growth and education. Informal economies are a complex, present and widespread phenomenon important in all types of economies (developing, transition, and developed). Not there is a consensus definition, causes, effects and methods of measuring the economy informal. All researchers agree on one point it has in common: it causes inefficiency in the functioning of the labour market and in the market of goods and services and encourages unfair competition between companies and countries. The informal economy

reduces government income and distorts official indicators (growth, unemployment, distribution of income).

Research results and comments

An increase in the informal economy can lead to its reduction state income, which reduces the quality and quantity of goods and services provided public. As a result, this could lead to an increase in the tax rate for firms and individuals in the formal sector, often accompanied by deterioration of the quality of public goods, with resulting in an even stronger incentive to participate in the shadow economy. Quality of services public thus turns into an important causal variable for people's decision to work or not in the informal economy.

Advantages of electronic money – electronic money allows to buy goods and services give and take debts. The main advantage that electronic money offers is convenience. It eliminates the need to carry cash with you. This money is already in the form of a bank account or a credit card, waiting to be withdrawn or used by the consumer. Another convenience that this money offers is saving time, since it is no longer necessary to go to the bank to withdraw money or transfer funds different.

Also, unlike paper money, electronic money is infallible because it does not it does not tear, does not get wet and does not deteriorate over time. With the creation of electronic money, a lot of banks have launched various products on the market, through which everyone has the opportunity to transfer funds from one bank account to another, buy various items online, and pay bills for water, electricity, telephone, etc. like paper money, electronic money gives you the opportunity to buy goods and services lend and receive. Convenience is the main advantage that money offers electronic.

Disadvantages of electronic money – Despite the advantages that electronic money offers, it also has some disadvantages. Some of these include fraud, technology failure and the uncertainty it causes people. One of the biggest concerns is that counterfeiters can create their own versions of money electronic, which would be indistinguishable from real money. These problems should gain public trust. Uncontrolled increase in the use of money electronic can jeopardize regulated money systems, allowing inefficient systems of flourish. In an uncontrolled electronic payment system, money laundering and evasion fiscal can spread rapidly. Therefore, it is important that the authorities monitor money circulation to detect these illegal activities. On the other hand, electronic money transactions are almost invisible in his eyes people, compared to cash transactions. Not having the opportunity to see these transactions as they happen, people tend to feel insecure for them.

Regarding the creation of values, it can be said that today there are creators of values quoted in scholarship. Individuals are those who form a society and as such are the ones with rights equal who should benefit from the redistribution of values. Value creators are those who they benefit at the same time as members of society and have the duty to pay and redistribute to be part of society. Beneficiaries are the final consumers of values

and society itself and the individuals that make it up. It is also a generator of values consumer of values. So e.g. if you perform an economic activity and are a beneficiary of directly of a value that society offers (infrastructure, security, etc.) for this service should you pay So this is a chain cycle of distribution and value generation.

Conclusion

The Albanian government is working on a broad program of reforms, focused on macroeconomic and fiscal sustainability, stabilization of the financial sector, energy, social assistance and disability, as well as territorial decentralization. Albania is implementing important structural reforms that will support equitable economic growth, increase productivity and competitiveness, create more jobs, improve governance and public service delivery. Improved regional connectivity and access to regional and global markets, coupled with market and export diversification, would also aid faster economic growth.

Informality cannot be expected to disappear completely because it is a dependent phenomenon from a number of economic, social, cultural policies as long as it is an integral part of the natural development of a country. The informal economy is one of the biggest challenges with it faced by the Albanian economy, which is identified with unregistered businesses, evasion fiscal and informal employment. The fight against informality in Albania aims to strengthen efficiency and competitiveness in the economy, improving the business climate, ensuring that a balanced tax policy is being applied, ensuring a sustainable and long-term growth of the economy, fulfilling the requirements to become part of the European Union. The fight against tax evasion, corruption and improvement in tax collection from entities, it is seen as the philosophy of the Albanian government to achieve formalization. Integration of the economy informal in the formal sector has turned into an emergency element for the sustainability of economic development in Albania. Efforts at formalization must be supported by policy concrete for reducing the level of informality.

State budget revenues do not depend on direct taxes, but rely mainly on indirect taxes. In developed countries, direct taxes have a greater weight, while in developing countries pay direct taxes to buyers or consumers. All Albanian citizens regardless of their income they do not incur indirect taxes as they consume goods and services necessary for their survival which are usually subject to the decision that indirect taxes. Indirect taxes are easier to collect and harder to pay avoided by taxpayers. Indirect taxes increase budget revenues in cases where the state has economic growth which is accompanied by an increase in consumption. They are part of the payment for the purchase of harmful goods affecting their price increase. These taxes are more favourable for the consumer.

References

Codrella A., Iannaci F., Information systems in the public sector: The e-Government enactment framework (2010), – The Journal of Strategic Information Systems Volume 19, Issue 1, March 2010, Pages 52 – 66.

Dhamo, A., Dhamo, I., & Manastirliu, I. (2023). Fundamental Rights and New Technologies. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research and Development*, 10(3), 121. <https://doi.org/10.56345/ijrdv10n319>

Communication from the European Union Commission, A European Consumer, Agenda – Boosting confidence and growth, COM (2012).

Dennis, C., Merrilees, B., Jayawardhena, C. and Tiu Wright, L. (2009), „E-consumer behaviour“, *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 43 No. 9/10, pp. 1121 – 1139. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560910976393>

Consumer confidence index (CCI) OECD publication – <https://www.oecd.org/en/data/indicators/consumer-confidence-index-cci.html>

Strategy for Consumer Protection and Market Surveillance 2014 – 2020.

ECC Preliminary Program for consumer protection and information policies (OJ C92,25-4-1975, f. 2-16).

Regulatory Impact Assessment, Alternative Dispute Resolution ADR with consumers, GIZ, December 2015.

World Bank (2018), „The Retail Payment Costs and Savings in Albania“.