



**13th Annual Conference of the  
EuroMed Academy of Business**

**Business Theory and Practice  
Across Industries and Markets**

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# **13th Annual Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business**

CONFERENCE READINGS

BOOK PROCEEDINGS

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## **Business Theory and Practice Across Industries and Markets**

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All full papers and abstracts submitted to the EMRBI Conference are subject to a peer reviewing process, using subject specialists selected because of their expert knowledge in the specific areas.

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## FOREWORD

The Annual Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business aims to provide a unique international forum to facilitate the exchange of cutting-edge information through multidisciplinary presentations on examining and building new theory and business models for success through management innovation.

It is acknowledged that the conference has established itself as one of the major conferences of its kind in the EuroMed region, in terms of size, quality of content, and standing of attendees. Many of the papers presented contribute significantly to the business knowledge base.

The conference attracts hundreds of leading scholars from leading universities and principal executives and politicians from all over the world with the participation or intervention of Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers, Company CEOs, Presidents of Chambers, and other leading figures.

This year the conference attracted about 170 people from over 25 different countries. Academics, practitioners, researchers and Doctoral students throughout the world submitted original papers for conference presentation and for publication in this Book of Proceeding. All papers and abstracts were double blind reviewed. The result of these efforts produced empirical, conceptual and methodological papers and abstracts involving all functional areas of business.

Due to challenges associated with the COVID-19, the EuroMed 2020 conference had to go online this year. The EuroMed Academy of Business would like to wish you the very best during these challenging times. We want you to know how much we value and appreciate your contribution to the EuroMed community and we wish you and your families all the best. Our thoughts go to those who suffered from the disease, to their families and friends, and to the doctors and medical staff who are fighting day after day at the forefront of the pandemic.

We wish to all that this 'different' and unique conference will be both fruitful and stimulating, as it used to be during the last 12 years.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We have all worked hard to ensure that this new online experience will be a great one for all participants. Consequently, most of our annual regular activities were normally scheduled online, including the inauguration event and key note speeches, parallel presentation and discussion sessions, journal special issue paper development workshops, networking and collaboration workshop, research project and publication workshop and more.

Many people and organizations are responsible for the successful outcome of the 13th Annual Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business.

It is acknowledged that a successful conference could not be possible without the special co-operation and care of the Track Chairs and Reviewers for reviewing the many papers that were submitted to this conference. Special thanks to the Session Chairs and Paper Discussants for taking the extra time to make this conference a real success.

The last but not the least important acknowledgment goes to all those who submitted and presented their work at the conference. Their valuable research has highly contributed to the continuous success of the conference.

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# **BOOK OF CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS**

# STRATEGIES FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE HOME FOOD DELIVERY SYSTEM: THE CASE STUDY OF DELIVEROO

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## ABSTRACT

## INTRODUCTION

Several companies (restaurants, fast-food, super and minimarkets, etc.) today offer their customers the opportunity to buy food products online and to deliver them at home through food delivery distribution systems (Pan et al., 2017; Agatz et al., 2008). The food delivery sector is, in fact, assuming increasing importance in the distribution system of food products and food meals as it is becoming an ordinary component of consumption habits (Fooddelivery.report, 2020). Some data confirm the growing trend of this sector worldwide with a revenue that stands in 2020 at US\$136,431m, of which US\$70,741m attributable to the Platform-to-Consumer Delivery segment; a value that should reach US\$182,327 in 2024 (Statista, 2020). This growing demand for food delivery is driven by changes in consumption habits due to less time for food preparation and family meals (Kilcast and Angus, Eds. 2007) and consequently greater consumer attention towards the purchase of ready-made food using food delivery. The growth of the sector has inevitably affected the demand for freight transport, especially in urban areas, leading to an intensification of flows, deliveries and returns, with negative inevitable consequences on air quality (Ehrler et al., 2020). In terms of pollution, for example, the urban transport of goods produces about 27% of the total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the EU countries (EU, 2020). Therefore, with the increase of the food delivery demand, if on the one hand there is a reduction in the number of trips to shops and car trips of consumers, on the other hand, there is an intensification of travel drivers with significant implications on the structure of traffic and pollution in urban areas (Bjørngen et al., 2019). In line with this, it becomes essential to adopt more sustainable transport systems for food delivery in order to reduce the carbon footprint (Wygonikand and Goodchild, 2012). From this point of view, over the last few years, several projects, among which the EnerNETMob, an InterregMed project, they were financed to identify best solutions in order to guarantee of greater transport sustainability through the use of electric vehicles for urban transport. The introduction of electric vehicles for food delivery, such as e-bikes, e-scooters, e-cars, could undoubtedly contribute to reducing the environmental impact of the distribution of food purchased online. Despite the greater attention toward sustainable transport systems, studies analyzing the economic, environmental and social impacts of the adoption of electric vehicles for foods distribution

are still scarce. A recent study carried out in the German market on the potential extent of electric vehicles for the short-range distribution of food products underlines the validity of this more sustainable alternative but at the same time detects additional costs for companies that consumers are unwilling to support (Ehrler et al., 2020). L'originalità di questo studio è di esplorare i principali fattori abilitanti dell'implementazione di sistemi di distribuzione sostenibili, attraverso l'uso di veicoli elettrici, nel settore della consegna di alimenti. I nostri risultati contribuiscono ad arricchire la letteratura in questo campo di ricerca e in particolare le strategie di gestione adottate dalle aziende di consegna di alimenti al fine di incoraggiare sistemi di consegna più sostenibili. Dal punto di vista gestionale, i risultati consentono informazioni utili per incoraggiare la diffusione di questi veicoli, contribuendo nel contempo a ridurre le emissioni nelle aree urbane.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The aim of this work is to investigate the main enabling factors facilitating the diffusion of the e-mobility in the food delivery sector through the analysis of the Deliveroo case study. Deliveroo s.r.l. has been chosen for two main reasons. First, the growing importance of the company in the food delivery market, with an annual turnover increase of +120 million euros in 2017, becoming one of the major national players for food delivery. Second, the company recently adopted a strategy to support the diffusion of electric mobility for home delivery through the subscription of specific agreements.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In order to explore and describe the main enabling factors facilitating the diffusion of the e-mobility in the food delivery sector, a conceptual framework was developed based on three theoretical lenses as the absorptive capacity model (ACAP) (Newey and Zahra, 2009), the dominant logic theory (Bettis et al., 1978), and the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1987). A case study approach has been used based on interviews and informal speeches with three business managers of functions, as a primary source, and archival data collection, as secondary information. The various data sources were triangulated.

## **EXPECTED RESULTS**

Today more than in the past, sustainable mobility has become a priority to respond to the environmental pressures of the various economic sectors, among which food delivery is one. The case study analysis aims to explore the strategy adopted by one of the most important food delivery companies on the international scene. Results show that the decision to adopt a more sustainable

distribution model, through the use of electric vehicles, is guided by the environmental pro-active behavior of the heads of the business managers, by the dominant logic of the top management and by the ability to acquire and capitalize market information.

*Keywords: electric mobility, online grocery shopping, sustainable behavior, emissions, food meals, supply chain, urban transport*

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## MEASURING THE CONSUMERS' LEVEL OF SATISFACTION FOR ONLINE FOOD DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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### ABSTRACT

### BACKGROUND

Lately, the spread of COVID-19 pandemic has led to a further increase in the number of customers who buy food products online to comply with the rules aimed at limiting the spread of the virus, and this surge will probably have a positive effect on m-commerce in the long term. Despite the growing diffusion of online food shopping, there are currently few empirical studies aimed at observing and understanding the level of satisfaction of consumers using modern m-commerce technologies. In addition, little research is consecrated to fill the scientific gap related to the analysis of Italian market, which have recorded an increasing share of consumers interested in buying food online above all during this dramatic pandemic period. Extant literature on online shopping of food products have mainly focused on identifying the main drivers affecting the acceptance and intention of online purchase or the continuance intention to buy online (Driediger and Bhatiasevi, 2019), on which characteristics of the product or seller affect this intention (Zheng et al., 2019; Daniel Shehan et al., 2019) and on what product information can determine a higher frequency of online purchases (Benn et al., 2015). Another interesting filed of research examined the behavior of online food buyers, in some cases by comparing online purchases with offline shopping (Van Droogenbroeck and Van Hove, 2020; Rogus et al., 2019) and the factors affecting the transition from offline to online purchase (Singh and Rosenghin, 2020).

### PURPOSE

Given this scientific framework, the aim of this work is to investigate the level of satisfaction of consumer in buying food by means of online grocery shopping channels during this grave COVID-19 pandemic, starting from the description of the main factors that have characterized the online spending behavior. The analysis was carried out by collecting data deriving from an online questionnaire administrated to an Italian 'snowball' sample through social networks and emails, in the March-May 2020 time range. The questionnaire was first tested by experts in online purchasing

channels and by scientific representatives. 249 were the final respondents that completed the survey. About 25% did not conclude the questionnaire because did not meet the criteria of having purchased at least once on line. Finally, the purpose was to elaborate an index by considering the evaluation expressed by the respondents on the main aspects characterizing the online spending behavior.

## METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The methodological idea was based on constructing a synthetic measure that, taking into account the respondents' assessments of specific aspects of their shopping experience, is able to express the degree of user satisfaction. From the methodological point of view, the synthesis was obtained using a non-aggregatory approach. The adoption of this methodology allows to obtain a synthesis of basic indicators without any operation on the data (normalization and aggregation) and allowing to respect their ordinal nature. There is a large literature on the treatment and synthesis of multidimensional systems of ordinal data using non-aggregative methods, allowing the construction of synthetic measures without the aggregation of the scores of basic indicators. Within this approach, poset has become a reference over the years, as demonstrated by many works in different fields of research (Carlsen and Bruggemann 2017, Arcagni et al. 2019). However, poset can also be suitable for quantitative data (see: Fattore 2018, Alaimo 2020, Alaimo et al. 2020a, Alaimo et al. 2020b), allowing overcoming of some limitations of the aggregative methods. A poset  $P=(X, \prec)$  is a set  $X$  equipped with a partial order relation  $\prec$ , i.e. a binary relation satisfying three properties (Neggers, 1998):

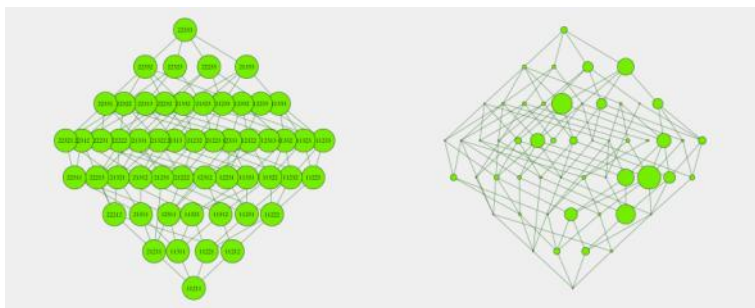
- reflexivity                     $x \prec x \quad \forall x \in X$   
antisimmetry                if  $x \prec y$  and  $y \prec x$  then  $x = y$ ,  $x, y \in X$   
transitivity.                if  $x \prec y$  and  $y \prec z$  then  $x \prec z$ ,  $x, y, z \in X$

The incidence matrix defines the structure of comparabilities; it is a matrix  $Z_p = (z_{ij}) \in Z^{k \times k}$  where  $|X| = k$  is the cardinality of  $X$  and  $z_{ij}$  is equal to 1 if  $x_i \prec x_j$ , otherwise is 0, with  $x_i, x_j \in X$ . It is necessary to define the cover relation to provide a graphical representation of comparabilities. Given two elements,  $x_i, x_j \in X$ , we can affirm that the element  $x_j$  covers the element  $x_i$  ( $x_i \prec x_j$ ) if  $x_j$  dominates  $x_i$  ( $x_i \prec x_j$ ) and there is no other element  $x_h \in X$  that jointly dominates  $x_i$  and is dominated by  $x_j$  ( $x_i \prec x_h \prec x_j$ ). The Hasse diagram is the graphical representation of the directed acyclic graph representing the cover relation  $\prec$ . In this graph, the orientation from top to bottom substitutes the arrows. By transitivity, two elements are comparable if a path connects them in the Hasse diagram. Posets are used to define the structure of comparabilities underling multi-indicators systems. Once the structure is defined, we can analyze it by using different mathematical tools (Fattore, 2017).

## EXPECTED RESULTS

The index has been constructed considering the evaluation expressed by the respondents on a scale from 1 (low) to 3 (high), on 5 aspects characterizing the online spending behavior: time, cost-effectiveness, product quality, purchase safety and judgement with respect to initial expectations. The first step has been the construction of the Hasse diagram. Figure 1 reports the Hasse diagrams representing the structure of comparabilities and the distribution of the respondents in each profile. The following step is to derive a synthetic measure from the structure of comparabilities. Through a simple procedure (Alaimo, 2020), it is possible to assign to each element of a finite poset a score representing its position in a "low-high" axis. In this way, we obtain the *average height*, i.e. the average position assumed by a profile in each of the considered linear extensions.

**Fig. 1. Satisfaction on online spending behavior - Hasse diagrams: general structure of comparabilities (on the left) and distribution of respondents in each profile (on the right).**



**Source: our elaboration**

We cannot use the average height – representing itself a synthesis – as an expression of the level of satisfaction, as it is a measure of (average) positioning of the profile in the general order. Furthermore, if we apply the quantile criteria to split the profile into groups, we could find in a single group profiles expressing very different levels of satisfaction and profiles of the same level in contiguous groups. In this way, we risk committing errors in attributing a satisfaction level to individual respondents. In addition to the position in the general order, we need to take into account the situation in terms of *satisfaction' deprivation* of each profile, by establishing a criterion to assign the response profiles to the "deprived" or "not-deprived" category. We can do this by defining a *threshold profile*. This choice allows characterizing the distribution according to a conceptual definition of the phenomenon. Starting from the partial order among the profiles, the aim of our analysis is to identify the deprived profiles, with respect to their distance from the threshold profile. By doing this, it will be possible to obtain a measure of the level of satisfaction of individuals that also takes into account the distance from a minimum level of satisfaction (the threshold) below which the respondents will certainly be dissatisfied. At the same time, it will be possible to identify all those profiles that will be dissatisfied



according to a certain level of uncertainty. Investigating the satisfaction of consumers that buy food via online grocery shopping can certainly be crucial for understanding consumer behavior thus giving new insights to retailers and producers as well as scholars and helping and defining valuable tools for improving the m-commerce.

*Keywords: food online shopping; index of consumers' satisfaction; online spending behavior; Italy; COVID-19 pandemic*

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# DETERMINING FACTORS AFFECTING THE CHOICE OF SUSTAINABLE FISH PRODUCTS: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION IN THE ITALIAN AND SPANISH MARKET

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## ABSTRACT

## INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the fish stocks have been increasingly depleted, due mainly to the overfishing and illegal fishing. The perception of excessive fishing capacity led in the early 2000s to a review of the Common Fisheries Policy and the approval of regulations aimed at recovering depleted fish stocks and achieving greater sustainability in the sector. At the same time, the environmental awareness of consumers has grown, resulting in a greater attention towards sustainable products. Despite the new trend in consumption, few scholars have so far focused on consumer habits of sustainable fish products (Kirby and Ward, 2014; Asche *et al.*, 2015; Asche and Bronnmann, 2017). To fill this gap, the aim of this study is to explore the main factors affecting the intention of consumers to choose sustainable fish products.

## METHODOLOGY

To achieve this purpose, a questionnaire was developed based on previous empirical studies on this topic (Grunert *et al.*, 2011; Panda *et al.*, 2020; Kiluchi-Uehara *et al.*, 2016) and conveyed through the main social networks. The survey was carried out in Italy and Spain, two of the most important EU fish producers countries (EUMOFA, 2020), during the period January-February 2020. At the end of the survey, we obtained 324 complete questionnaires, with reference to the Italian market, and 289 for the Spanish one. The data obtained concerned information on the frequency of fish consumption, quality attributes of the purchased products, the values and beliefs of consumers, as well as their socio-economic characteristics. Then, we performed two Probit regression models, respectively for the Italian and Spanish samples, in order to identify the main factors affecting the intention of consumers to choose sustainable fish products.

## RESULTS

Results reveal a greater willingness of Italian consumers (82.1% of the respondents) to choose sustainable fish products, than Spanish consumers (69.2%). Furthermore, the research suggests that those who claim to have strong values of environmental protection and those who are sensitive to altruistic values are more likely to choose seafood produced in a sustainable way. Similarly, the importance associated to the presence of eco-labels on purchased fish products affects positively the intention of consumers to make seafood choices more sustainable. With reference to the socio-economic variables, younger consumers show a greater probability to choose sustainable fish products.

## CONCLUSIONS

The paper presents interesting evidence on the intention of the consumers to commit themselves to make seafood choices more sustainable, showing the main factors affecting this behaviour. Furthermore, the results of the study provide practical implications. On the one hand, the work suggests new insights for entrepreneurs and fish industry operators to define their marketing plans based on the characteristics of consumers. On the other hand, findings provide to policy makers hints for defining awareness campaigns among the population, aimed to increase sustainable purchasing choices by consumers. Despite this, the research is not without limitations, due to the online sampling method, which does not provide a representative sample of the investigated populations. For this reason, future research could extend the investigation to a wider audience and other European countries.

*Keywords: Altruism; Awareness; Environmental values; Fish consumer; Italy; Probit model; Purchase decision; Seafood products; Spain.*

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