

## **DIETARY HABITS AND SUSTAINABLE ONLINE ORDERING AMONG ROMANIAN PROVINCIAL STUDENTS**

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### **Abstract**

The digital age has significantly transformed commerce, with the advent of GIG delivery applications marking a pivotal change, especially in urban settings, by facilitating convenient access to last-mile food delivery services. This study delves into the impact of these technological advancements on Gen Z's food preferences in metropolitan areas, with a particular focus on Romania's provincial regions. It investigates the role of traditional homemade food - a staple of Balkan and South-Eastern European culture, which remains under-researched - in shaping online food ordering habits among students. The current research fills a gap in the scientific literature, touching upon the socio-demographic-economic implications. It comprises a literature review and quantitative and qualitative data collection and interpretation. It aims to shed light on how deeply rooted culinary traditions influence modern consumer behaviour, especially among students who moved from provincial areas to urban centres for education. By examining the characteristics of these students and assessing the viability of a GIG delivery model that respects these cultural practices, the study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining empirical data and qualitative insights from interviews with students living in Bucharest. A questionnaire was used to gather information on their eating habits, focusing on those who have experienced a change in their situation due to university attendance, as they are more likely to utilise online food delivery apps. A regression model was performed to find relations between the students' profiles and online consumer behaviours, testing the feasibility of creating an app that delivers homemade food. The findings offer an understanding of the interplay between traditional preferences and the convenience provided by delivery apps, contributing to the discourse on digital commerce and the accommodation of cultural values in it.

### **Keywords**

students, diet, ecommerce, GIG, sustainability.

### **JEL Classification**

R11, Regional Economic Activity: Growth, Development, Environmental Issues, and Changes

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