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PREDICTORS OF PUBLIC ATTITUDE TOWARDS GENETICALLY MODIFIED MOTHER'S MILK

Abstract:

In the 21st century, many women played a dual role as working women and mothers. Breast feeding has been a problem for many working mother due to lack of privacy and adequate time in the working place. Genetically modified (GM) mother's milk could provide an alternative to human breast milk and formula milk for babies, but GM food has often been criticised. The purpose of this study is to identify the relevant factors influencing public attitude to mother's milk produced in genetically modified (GM) cows and to analyze the relationships among all the factors using structural equation model. A survey was carried out on 434 respondents from various stakeholder groups in the Klang Valley region of Malaysia. Results of the survey have confirmed that public attitudes towards complex issues such as GM mother's milk should be seen as a multi-faceted process. The most important direct predictors for the encouragement of GM mother's milk are the specific application-linked variables: perceived risks, perceived benefits and familiarity of GM mother's milk as well as two general attitude variables: general promise of modern biotechnology and societal value. Encouragement of GM mother's milk also involves the interplay between other factors such as threatening natural order of things, the need for labelling, the need for patenting and confidence on regulation. The research findings serve as a useful database for understanding the social construct of public acceptance of GM foods in developing country.

Keywords:

Public attitude, predictors, GM mother's milk, structural equation modelling

JEL Classification: D12, C39