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Intention to Consume Cultured Meat for the Benefit of the Doubt – from a Social Dilemma Perspective

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Abstract

Traditional meat production is associated with environmental degradation, animal welfare concerns, food safety risks, and difficulties in meeting the rising global demand for protein due to limited land and water resources. Cultured meat presents a sustainable alternative by addressing these challenges, offering benefits such as reduced environmental harm, better food security, better animal welfare, and possibly improved nutrition. Despite its potential, consumer acceptance remains low due to concerns and discomfort associated with its lab-grown nature. While progress has been made in Europe, the United States, and a few Asian countries, like China and Singapore, Malaysian attitudes toward cultured meat are still largely obscure. Consequently, this study examines the factors that influence consumers' intentions to consume cultured meat, with a particular emphasis on the Malaysian context, where research on this subject is scarce. This study targeted respondents across Malaysia, with 202 respondents from East and West Malaysia completing a structured survey. Using a quantitative approach with a descriptive design, data was collected via a Likert-scale questionnaire, and hypotheses were tested using SmartPLS. The findings revealed that sensory expectations, ethical concern and consumer awareness positively influence the intention to consume cultured meat. Nevertheless, the intention is negatively correlated with price, while perceived risk and environmental concern are not significant factors. To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first to employ the social dilemma theory to examine the factors that influence consumer acceptability of cultured meat. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for successfully integrating cultured meat into the food market.

Keywords: Consumer Acceptance; Consumer Attitude; Intention; Quantitative; Smartpls