
Green Minds: knowledge-based strategies for the adoption of a plant- based diet in 3-6 y.o. children

Thèse

PhD :

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Preview :

The rejection of plant-based food is a well documented phenomenon among three- to six-years-old children. Its effects on dietary habits and patterns are potentially detrimental to children's health, as it prevents them from consuming the recommended amount of vegetables and reduces the diversity of their diet. The over-reliance on processed and ultra-processed animal-based food in kids' diets is concerning from a sustainability standpoint, too. Experimental research in the field has focused on food neophobia and picky behaviour in order to better understand the nature of the problem and devise appropriate solutions. In particular, recent works found out that food rejection is negatively correlated with both children's proficiency in food-categorizing tasks and the amount of structured information about food they possess. Before outlining general conclusions on the topic, much work is still in order both in the empirical and the theoretical field. For instance, the extent to which the notions used by researchers are commensurable to the way children actually conceive food is yet to be fully assessed; nor we have a proper model for children's food ontology yet. The present project aims at individuating and bridging such gaps by providing an accurate conceptual analysis and reconstruction of children's naive food ontology, the nature of their rejection, and the status of the theoretical framework put forward by scholar so far. A more children-oriented and theoretically harmonized approach will thus allow scholars to devise strategies that take full advantage of the links between food knowledge and rejection rates in order to promote healthier and more sustainable dietary patterns.

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