

## 8 - Scientific Literacy and Socio-scientific Issues | Empirical

### SP - (15711) - THE EFFECTS OF A SOCIO-SCIENTIFIC DECISION-MAKING INTERVENTION ON GREEK STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS VEGETARIANISM

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#### Short Abstract

*This paper reports on the effect of a socio-scientific decision-making intervention on Greek primary school students' knowledge and attitudes towards vegetarianism. A number of 190 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from four primary schools in Greece enrolled in a pre-test post-test socio-scientific decision-making intervention that aimed to improve their decision-making skills. Vegetarianism was chosen as the main topic of the intervention for two main reasons: (1) there are limited studies looking at children's knowledge and attitudes towards vegetarianism and (2) Greece has one of the highest rates of childhood obesity in Europe partially because of heavy in meat diet followed by children and young people. The results show that students improved their vegetarianism knowledge scores at the post-test, but this improvement was not found significant. This finding shows that exposing students in the knowledge is not merely enough to improve their knowledge and more focus should be given to content knowledge when students engage in socio-scientific decision-making. However, it seems that students shifted their attitudes towards adopting a vegetarian diet. More specifically, 20% of the students stated that they had thought of the possibility of becoming vegetarians at pre-test, while double the proportion of students (41%) reached a decision in favour of adopting an only-vegetarian policy at their school after having been exposed to the arguments in favour and against vegetarianism. This is an important finding that can inform diet-related interventions to reduce children's daily meat intake and improve their diet habits, which is of crucial importance for the Greek context.*