Evaluating the nutritional status of children that follow a lacto-vegan Hare Krishna diet in a primary school

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**Introduction:** This research investigated the diet and nutritional value of the pupils at Hare Krishna primary school in London that follow a plant-based (lacto-vegan) diet. A systematic literature review revealed that there is no study investigating the Hare Krishna diet in a primary school in London. Therefore the aim of the current study is to nutritionally evaluate the diets of the children and engage with the parents and school in order to improve provision. Furthermore, this research will bring valuable data about the obesity rate in Hare Krishna children (children that followed the diet since birth) based in London and will raise awareness about the importance of a planned lacto-vegan diet to the parents from the Hare Krishna community.

**Methodology:** After the literature review, there are 3 stages to the study, the (1)baseline where anthropometric data will be collected as well as the 3-day diet plan (one weekend day and two weekdays) reported by parents. Also, the nutritional knowledge of the parents will be evaluated through a validated general nutritional knowledge questionnaire (GNKQ) to evaluate their understanding of food, nutrition and food choices. In the (2)intervention stage, nutritional workshops will be delivered for the parents and a sensory food education programme (Flavour School) for the children in order to inform them about nutrition. (3)Post intervention, the same steps from the intervention stage will be repeated.

**Conclusion:** The preliminary data suggest that the students are motivated to eat healthier after the nutritional sessions and are more mindful about their choices of being a vegetarian. The overall outcome of the research is to support plant-based nutritionally balanced diets for children that could lead to reducing obesity and to engage with the stakeholders in order to improve the nutritional provision at schools following plant-based diets.