



Packed lunch *fit*, the practical and healthy choice

Fit lunch box, the practical and healthy choice

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Summary

The Brazilian population of obese people over the age of 20 more than doubled in the period between 2003 and 2019, increasing the risk of cardiovascular diseases. Inadequate eating habits of parents can cause obesity in their children. Obese women suffer discrimination when getting jobs and earn less than thin women. Obesity is an epidemic and can cause several types of cancer, with breast cancer being one of the most difficult to treat due to the effects of being overweight. People use food as a compensatory way to reduce anxiety, leading to overweight and obesity. Support from doctors, family, friends and companies can contribute to reducing obesity. For companies, investing in healthy food will result in more engaged employees and less absenteeism and health problems. The demand for lunchboxes *fit* has grown in the last two years due to its practicality and can be a viable alternative, mainly to contribute to changing the habits of overweight people and women working double shifts, having to work, take care of children and deal with household chores, including cleaning and cooking. For successful sales of healthy food, it is recommended that it be advertised in places frequented by people concerned about health and aesthetics (gyms, beauty clinics, beauty salons, etc.) but, above all, on social networks and relationship channels. This research *paper* used a literature review with a qualitative approach as a methodology. **Key words:** Obesity. Practicality. Health. Technology. Customers.

Abstract

The Brazilian population of obese people over 20 years of age more than doubled in the period between 2003 and 2019, increasing the risk of cardiovascular diseases. Inadequate eating habits of parents can lead to obesity in children. Obese women suffer discrimination to get a job and earn less than thin women. Obesity is an epidemic and can cause several types of cancer, and breast cancer is one of the most difficult to treat due to the effects of overweight. People use food as a compensatory way to reduce anxiety, leading to overweight and obesity. The support of doctors, family, friends and companies can contribute to the reduction of obesity. For companies, investing in healthy food will result in more engaged employees and less absenteeism and health problems. The demand for fit lunchboxes has grown in the last two years due to its practicality and can be a viable alternative, mainly to contribute to changes in the habits of overweight people and women with double shifts, having to work, taking care of children and dealing with the household chores, including cleaning and cooking. For successful sales of healthy food, it is recommended to advertise in places frequented by people concerned with health and aesthetics (gyms, aesthetic clinics, beauty salons, etc.) but mainly on social networks and relationship channels. The present research of this paper used as methodology a bibliographic review with a qualitative approach.

Keywords: Obesity. Practicality. Health. Technology. Customers.

1. Introduction

According to the results of research carried out by IBGE (2020), with 108 thousand Brazilian households, between 2003 and 2019, the obese population over 20 years of age more than doubled, going from 12.2% to 26.8% (women: from 14.5% to 30.2% and men: from 9.2% to 22.8%). In the age group between 25 and 39 years old it exceeded 50%, being higher for men (58.3%) than for women (57%).

For the cardiologist at Incor (Instituto do Coração do Hospital das Clínicas da FMUSP), Pedro Augusto Bastos, being overweight continues to be a risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, even if obese people maintain a healthy lifestyle with physical exercise and good nutrition, therefore, It is important to make efforts to truly reduce weight (Hart, 2021).

Replacing the traditional homemade meal with food prepared by companies and professionals specialized in healthy eating can be an alternative in dietary re-education, contributing to weight reduction and freeing up time for regular physical exercise.

The methodology of this work was a bibliographical review with a qualitative approach and aimed to evaluate the benefits of replacing traditional food with lunchboxes. *fit*, with a main focus on overweight people and women with many daily tasks.

2 Food concerns and obesity

2.1 Childhood obesity

Research carried out by Peninsula *Medical School* in England, revealed that the inadequate behavior and eating habits of parents can be a determining factor in their children's obesity, which can lead to diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, as well as premature death in adulthood. It is up to parents to raise awareness, seek support from specialized professionals to reproduce healthy eating habits in their children and encourage them to practice regular exercise (Rauen, 2021).

Figure 1: Childhood obesity



two

Source: Karolina Grabowska, Pexels, 2023. (Available at: <https://www.pexels.com/pt-br/foto/bebe-nem-mat-carpet-4964353/>).

2.2 Obese women are hired and paid less

The research carried out by *Vanderbilt University* with 10,000 American women, concluded that women who were overweight earned lower wages compared to those who had an average body shape, or were thin, an average difference of seven dollars per hour. In addition to reduced pay, overweight women have difficulty being accepted and employed in the job market and are more likely to get jobs that require physical effort and little social interaction (Gasparini, 2015).

Figure 2: Obese women

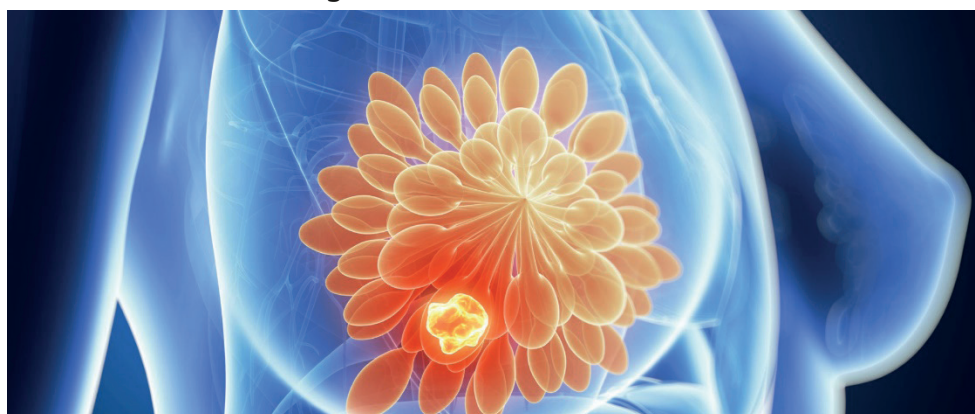


Source: Prepared by the authors, 2023.

3.3 Obesity and breast cancer

Obesity is already considered an epidemic and can cause several types of cancer, among which breast cancer is one of the most difficult to treat due to the negative effects of being overweight. There is a close relationship between obesity and breast cancer, as adipose tissue (generally inflammatory) produces hormones that, in excess, contribute to the development of the disease, especially in obese, sedentary and menopausal women. Practicing regular physical exercise and maintaining weight with adequate nutrition are essential for reducing the risk of the disease (Rauen, 2021).

Figure 3: Breast cancer



Source: Prepared by the authors, 2023.

2.4 Eating due to anxiety

Exaggerated consumption of high-calorie foods (sweets, chocolates, snacks, soft drinks, alcoholic drinks, etc.) may be associated with high levels of anxiety and stress, which can increase the chances of inflammatory processes and impact the central nervous system and/or trigger mental health problems such as depression (Guerra, 2022).

Figure 4: Anxiety



Source: Prepared by the authors, 2023.

People use food as a compensatory way to reduce anxiety, discomfort and anguish, however, most of the time they consume unhealthy foods, leading to overweight and obesity. In these cases, it is recommended to seek out health professionals and identify possible triggers that may be leading to this lack of control over eating (Guerra, 2021).

2.5 Companies can contribute to changing employee habits

Obesity is a disease and requires medical/nutritional support, from family, friends and, mainly, from companies, as workers spend most of their time in the workplace. Reducing stress and weight contributes to increased productivity and dedication to work, reducing absenteeism and healthcare costs (Pessoa, sd)

There may be potential professionals in overweight people. Companies that do not invest in diversity will be left behind, in addition to running serious risks of lawsuits in possible prejudice situations. Research carried out in 2017 by the Brazilian Institute of Opinion and Statistics (Ibope) demonstrated that 92% of Brazilians have already suffered from fatphobia in social relationships and in the workplace. In Brazil, there is no specific law to address the issue, and it is interpreted in the context of moral harassment. When humiliation occurs, they are assessed based on insult and crimes against honor, provided for in the Penal Code.

4

An alternative to be evaluated by companies is the provision of healthy, balanced food prepared by specialized professionals, during the working period, contributing to the nutritional re-education of employees, weight reduction and ensuring a healthier and more productive life.

2.6 the practicality of healthy lunch boxes

The demand for lunchboxes *fit* has grown in the last two years, driven by the Covid-19 pandemic, which brought restrictions on exercising in gyms and outdoors and by a public concerned about health and practicality. This type of food can be requested at the time of the meal (*La Carte*), usually on food apps (e.g. *Ifood*, *Rappi*, *Uber Eats*, *99food*, among others) or ordered in larger combos to guarantee healthy food for longer (weekly, fortnightly and monthly), at a reduced cost (Diário de Curitiba, 2022).

It is extremely important for the entrepreneur or healthy food company to ensure that the menu advertised as *fitness* comply with the requirements in practice, mainly due to the possibility of people with dietary restrictions consuming lunch boxes and aggravating any pre-existing health problem. Therefore, hiring nutritionists to prepare the menu or taking courses with these professionals is essential for preparing food according to recommended standards (Diário de Curitiba, 2022).

For weight loss and an adequate/healthy diet, it is important to prioritize foods such as eggs, fish, meat, vegetables, nuts, legumes, fruits, whole grains and dairy products (UOL, 2022). However, preparing these foods requires time and dedication, which most of the time competes with the busy day to day of work and study.

Mostly, women work double shifts, having to work, take care of their children and deal with domestic tasks, including cleaning and cooking. A reality corroborated by the report released by the United Nations that women perform 2.6 times more unpaid work than men (Wilding, 2018). Mainly due to the cultural factor, domestic tasks and the preparation of the main meals still remain the responsibility of women, among whom, 76% are mothers of children between seven and 17 years old and work outside the home (Brenton; Bower; Elliott, 2020).

To alleviate the burdens, especially of women, the consumption of lunchboxes *fit* can be an alternative, which in addition to reducing the time spent purchasing and preparing food, favors the consumption of balanced food as it is prepared by professionals specialized in the subject. It also reduces the time dedicated to washing dishes and cleaning the kitchen, leaving time with family and for physical activities.

3. Lunchboxes *fits*

3.1 Distribution of lunch boxes

It is recommended that healthy food companies advertise lunch boxes *fit*, mainly in places frequented by people concerned about health and aesthetics, such as gyms, beauty clinics, beauty salons, among others (Marmitex de Sucesso, 2019).

5

Publishing on social media and relationship channels can be a game changer for business success *fitness*, with powerful means of communicating with customers. Through the *marketing* Digitally, it is possible to demonstrate to consumers the behind-the-scenes of production, the company's values, the brand's positioning and reputation, as well as the social responsibility of healthy products. Whatsapp, Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, Linkedin and Tik Tok are the most used and well-known social networks today, therefore, it is important for the company to research the best option to adapt marketing

of your product *fit*, including the media most used by the competition (Agência Sebrae de Notícias, 2021).

The success of the digital business is also linked to the quality of well-crafted content for prominent positioning in search engines or sponsored advertisements. *Blogs* with matters related to what the company provides, as well as the quality of texts, arts, *links*, videos (interactive and dynamic), can be opportunities to attract and retain potential consumers. Another advantage of promoting products on *Internet* is the possibility of measuring the results of *marketing*, because during these actions it is possible to analyze and calibrate activities to achieve more precise and effective results. Through social networks, it is also possible to generate reports with data (age of customers, time of greatest participation, location, gender - female/male) and other valuable information about how users interact with the published content, allowing the creation of specific campaigns that directly reach the target audience. Free tools like Google Analytics and Google Adwords enable companies to extract information from their customers' audiences. *websites*, which favors continuous management and adjustments to dissemination strategies (Cambui, 2017).

Also, user visits to *websites* They can occur organically or paid. In organic (non-paid) traffic, the search for products/services happens naturally/spontaneously, while in paid traffic, there is investment (may be low) by the company to disseminate content to consumers quickly and efficiently, which can be a favorable and cheap strategy for promoting healthy food (Agência Sebrae de Notícias, 2021).

Still, the tool *remarketing* is another strategy that can contribute to the sale of lunch boxes *fit*, as it displays the product in other *websites* after a visitor accesses the product on the *website/blog* and not making the purchase (Cambui, 2017).

3.2 Successful entrepreneurs selling lunch boxes *fit*

Health-focused sectors, such as gyms, supplement stores and healthy food stores, continue to grow. Two friends (aged 28 and 29) opened the *LightChef*, one *e-commerce* of lunch boxes *fit* frozen products that grew and had revenues of R\$3 million in 2016. They initially decided to serve only greater São Paulo due to the perishability of the products. The menu is prepared by the company's nutritionist, which conveys greater credibility to consumers. The company has the support of 22 employees (*chefs*, nutritionist, administrative and logistics), focused on preparing and delivering healthy food to customers (Ecommerce de Sucesso, 2017).

The Levinho company *Fit* was created by entrepreneur Gisa Oliveira (39 years old), resident of the outskirts of the South Zone of São Paulo. The business was started with the only R\$ 200.00 she had at the time and today it earns an average of R\$ 7 thousand (gross) per month, with the sale of around 40 *kits* (lunch boxes *fit* + natural juice). She started selling to friends and acquaintances who like physical activities, however, 40% of orders arrive

6

through digital media. Her success and that of other entrepreneurs who sell healthy food confirm the results of the survey carried out by Euromonitor International, that Brazil is fourth in the *rankings* sales of healthy foods, the market for which grew 98% between 2014 and 2017 (Martinelli, 2018).

Entrepreneur Monique Turqueti took training courses in *marketing* digitally at Sebrae (Brazilian Support Service for Micro and Small Businesses) and with the strategies of publicity tools on social media, it managed to sell 700 lunch boxes *fit* in a single day. Sebrae consultant Ariadne Mecato



recommended that Monique continue to engage her target audience on social media, with attractive photos, constant posts on *stories* on Instagram and tasting at the physical point of sale, aiming to maintain and increase sales (Agência Sebrae de Notícias, 2020).

Conclusion

Preparing recommended meals for a healthy lifestyle takes time to buy, store and cook food, which ends up competing with commitments and daily tasks.

As a result, the demand for lunchboxes *fit* has been growing, motivated by an audience that seeks practicality and health at the same time. Purchasing healthy food encourages the consumption of a varied and balanced diet, reducing the time dedicated to preparing food, washing dishes and cleaning the kitchen, making it possible to carry out regular physical activities and spend more time with the family.

It can be a viable alternative, especially for women who work and are responsible for household chores and for people who are overweight or obese, as a form of nutritional re-education.

Investment in and provision of healthy food by companies will likely contribute to healthier employees who are dedicated to their work. Furthermore, it encourages changes in habits that can be reproduced in employees' children, helping to reduce childhood obesity.

Successful entrepreneurs in the food market *fit*, are managing to reach and meet the demands of different audiences, mainly by using the tools and strategies made available by the *marketing digital*.

The research revealed that the dissemination of content (videos, arts, *link* etc.) in a clear and objective way, as well as the management and continuous calibration of campaigns, mainly based on consumer interaction data with materials already published, generated/extracted by free tools such as Google Analytics and Google Adwords, can be opportunities to attract and retain customers.

Also, invest in paid traffic and *remarketing*, disseminating content to consumers quickly compared to the competition, can be efficient strategies to achieve more accurate results in the marketing of the business *fit*.

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7

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