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EATING HABITS PRESENTED BY WORKERS OF A HOTEL IN MACEIÓ/AL

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Abstract: The nutritional profile is the consequence of the routine of eating habits and lifestyle changes in recent years, which leads to increased levels of diseases related to obesity, sedentary lifestyle, such as hypertension and diabetes. Therefore, the work environment is very influential in this process of having a healthy diet. The present study aimed to observe the eating habits of employees and the promotion of corrective measures for the practice of healthy eating. This is a longitudinal observational study, which was carried out in a Food and Nutrition Unit. In this context, a nutritional education activity was developed with information about food sources of nutrients that help in immunity. The action was called “Demystifying foods”, and was divided into 2 stages, carried out during the intraday break. The World Health Organization defines health as *a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being*, that is, health is much more than the absence of disease. It is to establish limits for human food, whether in natura or minimally processed foods and that ultra-processed foods must be avoided. Thus, in order to make progress in the eating habits of workers, it is essential that there is greater incentive and that the Unit starts to offer healthier choices in meals, in addition to proposing more nutritional education activities addressing the various topics of nutrition, enabling employees to opt for a healthier lifestyle.

Keywords: Food and Nutrition Unit. Obesity. Eating habits.

INTRODUCTION

The Food and Nutrition Units (UANs), or collective feeding, aim to provide and serve healthy, balanced meals, with sufficient nutrients for quality of life and the practice of adequate habits of its contributors (RAMOS et al., 2013).

It is also understood that in order to have

quality in these services, we need to include hygienic-sanitary safety, adequate cleaning of equipment and facilities that come into contact with food and employees (FERNANDES; SANTOS, 2018).

Ensuring better conditions in the quality of life with regard to healthy eating is a relevant requirement in this process. At the same time, different forms of interventions and nutritional strategies can be applied in order to promote harmony between labor relations and worker health, thus reducing possible health problems (PINHEIRO, 2020).

In addition to this challenge of the distances to be covered by the worker to reach the workplace, he is pressured to obtain satisfactory productivity results due to the pressure exerted on companies by competition. In addition, there is also a demand for constant updating regarding new trends and customer needs, which can significantly influence the increase in stress in the work environment (SILVA, 2015).

In this context, it is possible to see the employees' cafeteria as a place that can help the enterprises in the Unit to offer their employees a quality environment, which can meet their needs during the period in which they have meals, generating a feeling of well-being (CARNEIRO; REIMER, 2018)

The food offered at the Unit aims to provide adequate energy and nutrition, in order to favor the biopsychosocial growth of employees, as well as promote the effective development of their activities. All nutrients, as well as vitamins and minerals, are essential and each one of them plays a fundamental role for the body and must receive greater attention. of quality of life. Some nutrients such as Vitamin A, C, D, calcium, magnesium, omega 3, selenium and zinc can act positively on the immune system (BIASEBETTI; RODRIGUES; MAZUR; 2018).

In this sense, the objective of the present

study was to observe the eating habits, through the food of workers during the lunch break, in a hotel located in the city of Maceió-AL.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This is an observational, longitudinal study carried out in the area of access to the cafeteria of a four-star hotel, in the city of Maceió-AL, with the purpose of providing nutritional guidelines regarding the role of nutrition associated with immunity, in favor of the health of the child. worker and promote food and nutrition education in a group of workers at a FNU.

First, there was an observation during lunch meals on two alternate days of the preparations consumed by the hotel staff. Lunch was always offered 2 protein options, 2 cereal options (rice and pasta in different forms of presentation), 1 legume option (beans), farofa offered daily, 1 option of fruit juice and fruit or some dessert sweet, raw and cooked salads were not well accepted, being offered sporadically at lunch.

Subsequently, based on the information collected, a nutritional education activity entitled “Demystifying food” was developed in the hotel’s cafeteria.

In the 1st moment, a poster was exposed containing food figures (orange, lemon, strawberry, tomato, cabbage, beans, cereals) next to it, explanatory pamphlets were placed on in natura foods and versions with beneficial nutrients for the health of the diner, making it available for employees to read. The objective in this 1st stage was to show employees the different ways of presenting food and its benefits for health. Posters were displayed and informational folders were distributed, in addition to a table showing food sources of essential nutrients to maintain a good quality of life.

In the 2nd stage, an exhibition was carried out with the foods most consumed

by employees as observed during an intraday break. Next to each suggestion, a wooden-based instructional tool was used, illustrating a roulette entitled “Nutritional information roulette”, with nutrients that help to improve the quality of life, namely: Magnesium, omega 3, vitamin D, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, selenium and zinc. These were represented by eight different colors to facilitate the public’s understanding of the nutrient and its specific sources. And each base color contained a specific nutrient and its sources, respectively in the same color, being linked by the pointer that showed these sources in animated illustrations.

The last stage of nutritional education was carried out with nutritional guidelines according to the reality of the target audience, guiding them on smart choices, aiming at cost-effectiveness and better quality of life for the worker, linking preventive methods associated with healthy eating through posters and informative folders. In all these stages, the reactions and behaviors of the employees were observed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Currently the hotel has 220 employees, of which only 88 employees make daily use of UAN services at lunchtime. The population evaluated is mostly men, aged between 25 - 55 years and in a minority women, aged between 20 - 45 years, according to data issued by the human resources department of the Hotel.

By observing the food consumed by hotel employees during lunch, there was a greater preference for fried and cold meats. Low-fat cooked meats and fish in sauce had a low acceptance by diners, preferring fatty options with the justification that such preparations would have a greater added flavor.

Regarding the consumption of fruits and vegetables (FLV) it was clear that the female audience mostly consume a greater amount

of this food group throughout the day than the male audience. It can be seen that men had great difficulty in maintaining a regular consumption of such foodstuff, where the majority did not exceed the consumption of 1 daily portion of FLV and only a small group consumed 2-3 portions of fruits and vegetables during the passage of time. power unit.

Corroborating our research, a study carried out by Bittencourt et al. (2019) observed that in the male group, even though they had a consumption of this food group, it is not something regular since only a small portion includes such vegetables in their daily consumption, but even these individuals ended up not respecting the adequate recommendation of 5 portions/ FLV day. It was possible to notice that the food consumption of vegetables is much higher in the group composed of women, as they seek to include a greater variety of FLV daily in their food routine.

When comparing both sexes in relation to food consumption of FV, it was possible to notice that women had a better dietary pattern than men, as they include a greater variety of fruits and vegetables in their daily diet.

The usual food consumption of fruits and vegetables is closely linked to the knowledge of the positive potential of such supplies, from the moment the power of food is known, it is more common to want to include them in the diet, when one does not know about them. more normal is to keep the same eating habits (MARIN; BERTON; ESPIRITO SANTO, 2009)

The groups studied showed a satisfactory pattern of FLV food consumption when compared to the reference of the new Family Budget Survey - POF 2017-2018 and which can be complemented by the study by MORATOYA (2013), which discusses the importance of a variety of fruits and vegetables to obtain the necessary supply of nutrients

and vitamins for the proper functioning of the human body. The Brazilian table is rich in terms of the variety of food sources, when compared to other countries that sometimes have a diet rich in ultra-processed foods and poor in in natura food.

When carrying out a study, it is important to take into account the particularities of each region of Brazil, the Northeast, for example, has a higher consumption of legumes, oilseeds, cereals and fruits, when compared to other regions of Brazil (Family Budget Survey - POF 2017-2018).

Another point to be taken into account is the way in which these vegetables are prepared, as the cooking technique, the incorporation of oils and fats during preparation can significantly reduce the nutritional value of the same and the supply of nutrients previously present in it (CANELLA). et al., 2018).

Still using the study by Canella et al. (2018) as a theoretical framework to justify the low consumption of vegetables and fruits among Brazilians, which becomes even worse for individuals who have the power of choice regarding the inclusion of ultra-processed foods in their daily diet. The highest consumption of FLV on the table in Brazilians is during lunch, raw vegetables and even so with limited variety.

In the last decades, the functional food market has been growing and gaining recognition among Brazilians, being known as health promoters, not only as a necessary nutritional source to supply deficiencies in the body (CHAVES; FRANCO; OLIVEIRA, 2018).

During the exhibition of posters and distribution of informative folders, the female audience showed a greater interest in learning and demonstrated a lot of knowledge about the functionality of food and what benefits they could bring to the health of those who included them in the routine. Men, on the

other hand, did not have the same interest and did not know how to differentiate a functional food from a conventional food, for them the only function of food would be to satisfy hunger.

Then there was an exhibition with the foods most consumed by employees. A wood-based explanatory tool was used, illustrating a “Nutritional Information Roulette”, with nutrients that help improve the quality of life.

Finally, the nutritional education stage was developed nutritional guidelines according to the reality of the target audience, guiding them on smart choices, aiming at the beneficial cost and better quality of life for the worker.

It was also observed that the consumption of food sources of omega 3 during meals was very different between the groups, the women, for the most part, included olive oil as a seasoning in the meals and preferred to consume fish when offered in the cafeteria, especially sardines. While men did not use olive oil as a seasoning, only salt and on days when they had fish (sardines), they preferred sausages (sausage and jerked beef).

Through the method used, it was possible to perceive that those involved were able to observe and understand the reason for healthy options, the important and auxiliary role of nutrients in health and to add a better quality of life, seek in food, healthy choices of low cost, but that can help in the health of this worker and his family.

The non-inclusion of dietary sources of omega 3 may be due to the impossibility of families with lower social class to maintain an adequate diet due to the high cost of foodstuffs today, thus purchasing less foods considered healthy, with whole grains, milk and derivatives, vegetables, lean meats, etc. (COELHO; AGUIAR; FERNANDES, 2009).

Another point that influences the low adherence of alternative sources of omega 3 in the diet of the population is the western diet to

which the group is adapted, which has a high index of saturated fat, from animal sources, consequently reducing the supply of W- 3 in the diet. (STEFANALLO; PASQUALOTTI; PICHLER, 2019).

Omega 3 fatty acid is closely linked to the prevention and reduction of various diseases, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, inflammatory diseases, and even neurodegenerative diseases. (STEFANALLO; PASQUALOTTI; PICHLER, 2019) Since this is a nutrient of extreme importance for human health, it is necessary to follow the recommendations of daily consumption of omega 3, 1g per day of W-3 (KAYSER et al., 2010).

A study shows that the consumption of fruits and vegetables is closely associated with a decrease in mortality, development of non-communicable chronic diseases (diabetes and obesity) and even some types of cancer, but contrary to what is recommended, the Brazilian population has the habit of eating an amount far below the recommended daily amount of FVL, contributing to the increase in cases of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases among the Brazilian population (NEUTZLING et al., 2009).

The consumption of fruits and vegetables is so important for maintaining health due to the nutrients present in these foods. The vitamins and minerals that make up food are essential and each one of them plays an important role in the functioning of the body. Deficiencies of such micronutrients can cause undesired adverse effects on human function. A healthy and varied diet leads the individual to absorb a greater amount of nutrients, improving the quality of life. Therefore, it is essential that the population adopt new healthier eating habits, with the aim of hindering the development of food shortages and some chronic diseases (OLIVEIRA et al., 2021).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The best strategies for Food and Nutrition Education are those that lead to the expansion of knowledge, explaining to individuals the importance of adopting new eating habits that can guide them towards a better lifestyle.

Regarding the educational activity, it occurred satisfactorily, the hotel team members were participative, showed interest in the subject from beginning to end, individually questioning about the

functionality of nutrients and how they can enhance health. During the educational activity, some team members indicated that they lacked information on how to make better food choices and that from that moment on, they would seek to improve their eating habits and share new knowledge with their family members.

There is a need to maintain oriented and health-promoting activities aimed at improving the quality of life of workers.

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