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**SOCIAL BUSINESS AND
SOCIAL INEQUALITY:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE
CONTRIBUTION OF THE
FOOD SECTOR IN THE
DISTRICT OF JARDIM
SÃO LUÍS/SP**

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Abstract: Brazil is a country marked by high social inequality and access to food is one of the main social indicators of the differences between the rich and the poor. Food directly influences the quality of life and health of the population, with low-income people being the most affected by the difficulty of accessing healthy food. This way, the performance of the food sector aimed at the low-income population contributes to the reduction of social inequality, either through the offer of gastronomy courses that will train and generate opportunities for socially vulnerable young people and adults, or through the construction of different tools of awareness about waste and full use of food, thus generating possibilities to undertake and connect people through gastronomy. Social Business emerges as an undertaking capable of complementing government action, acting on social problems and contributing to the achievement of the goals established by the United Nations (UN) in the 2030 Agenda.

Keywords: Social Inequality, Food, Social Business.

INTRODUCTION

The economic crisis that plagues Brazil could be the biggest in its history, the result of the combination of political instability and health calamity that has also affected the world. According to UNDP data (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic has the potential to aggravate the scenario of social inequality, and could push more than 1 billion people into extreme poverty by 2030. Bringing to a smaller scale, but no less important, the peripheral regions suffer an even greater impact, considering that they are domiciled by the low-income population.

However, social inequality is present in Brazil in different dimensions since the country was a colony of Portugal. With the arrival of blacks in Brazil, the patriarchal

system began, where planters exercised total power over their slaves. Even after the abolition of slavery in Brazil in 1888, blacks experienced difficulties, as they did not receive any legal support, without having a place to live or compensation for the forced labor performed. According to Souza (2016), slavery, the lack of land distribution and the patriarchal system contributed to the formation of a nation with great social differences.

In 2015, leaders of United Nations Member States gathered for a UN conference (United Nations) with the aim of creating an action plan to end extreme poverty and hunger, promote economic, social and social development. and environment worldwide. To this end, a list of goals and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030 was prepared, where each of these goals can be considered as a way of guaranteeing Human Rights. In order to meet this challenge proposed by the UN, there is a need for innovative initiatives, it is in this context that Social Business emerges, a type of business focused on generating a positive impact on society.

Unlike Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and traditional companies, Social Businesses do not depend on donations from third parties to remain active and their main objective will always be their mission in society and not financial growth (YUNUS; MOINGEON; LEHMANN-ORTEGA, 2010). The State, companies and society have their individual roles and responsibilities and according to Kofi Annan (2003), former Secretary General of the United Nations, the population must remember that the violation of the human rights of any individual is a problem that concerns the whole of society, governments and the international community, and thus everyone's responsibility. Public policies are not enough to resolve the situation of 27.7 million Brazilians living on the poverty line, according to FGV data

(2021). Through Social Business it is possible to have a positive impact on a community, broaden the perspectives of a population and provide financial autonomy for the lower economic classes.

STUDY OBJECT

The object of study of this research is a Social Business in the food sector founded in the district of Jardim São Luís, in the state of São Paulo. This Social Business aims at transformation through gastronomy and believes that education transforms people and reduces social inequalities. Its work is based on the following Sustainable Development Goals: eradication of poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, decent employment and economic growth, reduction of inequalities and responsible consumption and production (``Gastronomia Periférica, 2021).

THEORETICAL REFERENCE

SOCIAL BUSINESS: FEATURES AND CHALLENGES

The study on Social Business in Brazil is still scarce, making it difficult to understand and leading to confusion regarding the different definitions and existing aspects. However, according to (JAHCHAN; COMINI, D'AMARIO, 2016, p.537) "Social Businesses are undertakings that align market logic and social logic, that is, they seek self-sustainability through the sale of products and services together with the generation of social value".

The term social entrepreneurship is a key terminology to refer to business initiatives and other organizations that are aimed at creating social value without having as their main objective the generation of their own income. Despite the multiple terms such as: Social Company, Social Impact Business, Business facing the Bottom of the Pyramid, Inclusive

Business and Social Business, the objective of all is the same: to meet social demands and promote transformations in society.

According to Dornelas (2015), social entrepreneurship has an extremely important social role in developing countries like Brazil, since through it, gaps left by public authorities can be filled. In addition, social entrepreneurship emerges as a tool capable of offering improvements, quality services, employment and independence of a community. However, the responsibility of the public power must not be forgotten, since the construction of the common good is everyone's duty.

For Naigeborin (2010), one of the main challenges in the field of Social Business is the lack of legal instruments (bylaws, social contracts, shareholder agreement, etc.), since their absence does not safeguard the purposes of this business model. In Brazil, there is no predominance of a single social business model, as organizations can legally adopt different structures such as commercial companies, civil associations, cooperatives or OSCIPS (Civil Society Organizations of Public Interest), thus obeying the simple companies and business companies, two categories provided for under Articles 982 and 44 of the Civil Code (Costa e Souza, 2018).

From the allowed social or business framework, Naigeborin says that many entrepreneurs adopt more than one structure in order to facilitate the focus of action. To ensure legality, it is sometimes necessary to open two institutions – one for profit and the other not for profit –, which increases the complexity of the business, especially due to the duplication of costs and efforts in the managerial, financial and accounting areas (Naigeborin, 2010, p.8). Another challenge considered by Naigeborin (2010) is the low engagement of the government, at the federal, state and municipal levels, especially in areas

of basic rights such as health, education and basic sanitation, still hindering the growth of social businesses.

In view of the diversity of views and concepts, in this work, the objective is to demonstrate the relevance of businesses that have the objective of causing a positive socio-environmental impact and being financially self-sustainable, regardless of the nomenclature to be used. The purpose of this new type of business becomes more relevant than the nomenclature itself, since it brings with it a vision that goes beyond profit, unlike the exclusively mercantilist vision that brought great socio-environmental damage and contributed to social inequality.

SOCIAL BUSINESS AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (ODS'S)

The term “sustainable development” was first used in 1987, in the *Brundtland report* prepared by the World Commission on Environment and Development belonging to the UN, where the risks linked to the uncontrolled use of natural resources without taking into consideration, the capacity of the ecosystem were highlighted. The *Brundtland report* addresses global concerns such as the social and economic conditions of society, eradication of hunger and poverty, the preservation of human rights and urban planning (SILVA, 2021).

However, attempts to bring human rights and the environment closer together began in 1972, at the Stockholm Conference, and then became part of the political discussions of nations (CANELAS, 2005). From that Conference, according to Ferreira (2008), debates about the environment began to gain visibility outside the academic environment.

Over the years, there have been numerous debates about the economic and social pillars that could align the preservation of biodiversity

and the sustainability of natural resources until they arrived at the preparation of the document “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in September 2015, where representatives of 193 UN Member States met in New York and admitted that eradicating poverty was the greatest global challenge. The 2030 agenda is made up of 17 integrated and indivisible goals divided into 169 goals that balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These goals and targets serve as a guiding guide for governments, civil society, the private sector and all citizens towards a more sustainable and resilient society (AGENDA 2030, 2021).

“Gastronomia Periférica” is a social business whose mission is to train peripheral cooks who become multipliers in the fight against waste and agents of transformation of their own lives (GASTRONOMIA PERIFÉRICA, 2021). This is possible through the projects developed by the school, which are:

1. Gastronomy courses

Cooking and Entrepreneurship Course: it is a course aimed at those who already have a business in the area of food or have that desire.

Professional Cooking Course: aimed at those who want to start in the world of gastronomy.

The number of people registered to compete for vacancies is greater than the number of vacancies available, therefore, selection criteria such as color or race, gender and economic conditions are adopted (GASTRONOMIA PERIFÉRICA, 2021). This way, black people, women and those with lower purchasing power are priority in the selection ranking, since socioeconomic studies such as those presented earlier in this research demonstrate that a large part of the marginalized population has these characteristics.

2. Rango

It is the *catering* service offered by GP that is based exactly on the profile of each client, always seeking zero food waste and generating job opportunities and social inclusion. This project has a social impact on 3 groups:

- a. Suppliers: inputs are purchased from a small local producer and the packaging of everything served is from the periphery. Furthermore, all money is reinvested among your peers.
- b. Customers: inclusion of conscious consumption and appreciation and preservation of natural resources.
- c. Team: the entire food team is made up of students and former students of ``Escola Gastronomia Periférica``, thus generating job opportunities and social inclusion.

3. ``Gastronomia Periférica`` APP

The ``Gastronomia Periférica`` APP maps all gastronomic entrepreneurs from the outskirts of São Paulo in order to move the local economy and promote visibility through technology. Through the visibility that the application provides, people get to know and consume within the region's businesses. This visibility that will spin the local economy; generate income, create jobs and bring more professionalization to businesses, while promoting cultural diversity and human development (LEITE, 2018; ``GASTRONOMIA PERIFÉRICA``, 2021).

Thus, it is noted that since the beginning of global discussions about sustainable development, the issue of people's quality of life and the promotion of a better world with less social inequalities are present. Linked to this, it is possible to say that Social Businesses share the same thinking, since they have the objective of solving social problems. In addition, many businesses are built based

on the SDGs, thus contributing to the contribution of the private sector to achieving the objectives and goals established by the 2030 Agenda, in addition to strengthening and integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions (MALVESTITI, FIGUEIREDO, ESTEVES, 2020).

PUBLIC POLICIES AND FOOD INEQUALITY

Combating deprivation of freedom and social inequalities has been on the political agenda of many countries since the mid-twentieth century. The Sustainable Development Goals represent an action plan in which the 193 UN member states, including Brazil, committed themselves to adopting measures to combat what are considered the greatest global social problems. Among the commitments signed are the elimination of extreme poverty and hunger, offering quality education throughout life for all, protecting the planet and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies by 2030 (UNICEF, 2021).

Through the research coordinated by the Food for Justice Research Group: Power, Politics and Food Inequalities in the Bioeconomy (2020), it was possible to observe the existing inequalities regarding the situation of food security. The new coronavirus pandemic had socioeconomic impacts that led thousands of Brazilians to a situation of social vulnerability, with a situation of public calamity being declared in Brazil on March 20, 2020. implemented in several countries around the world, created Emergency Aid as one of the measures for social protection and mitigation of the economic crisis resulting from the effects caused by COVID-19. Initially, the announced Emergency Aid would last for three months, but as the crisis lasted longer than expected, it needed to be extended (MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP, 2021).

When a breakdown by sex was performed

in households with only one person in charge, those in which the person in charge was female had higher food insecurity. Furthermore, severe food insecurity is almost twice as high in households where the woman is the sole caregiver compared to those where the male is the sole guardian (figure 2).

When looking at race or color, among households with a single person in charge, it was identified that in those where the person in charge was of white race or color, food security was more frequent (51.1%). In households where the person in charge was black or black, food security was 33.2% and brown or brown (32.2%) (figure 3).

Due to the importance of Emergency Assistance for family income during the pandemic in Brazil, the research produced by Galindo et. al (2021, p.32) also presented data regarding the impact of public policies such as ``Bolsa Família`` and Emergency Aid on the food security of the interviewed population.

Households that had retirement funds experience better levels of food security (43.6%) than those who receive emergency aid (25.9%) and those who receive ``Bolsa Família`` (11.8%). Attention is drawn to the proportion of moderate (23.5%) and severe (35.0%) food insecurity among beneficiaries of ``Bolsa Família``, with quite high percentages (figure 4).

According to Galindo et al (2021), insecurity is the result of multidimensional factors that restrict the quality and quantity of access to food. Although income alone is not a determining factor to justify this situation, in Brazilian households, those with lower income and unfavorable working conditions are at greater risk of food insecurity. This way, it is necessary for the government to act in the process of implementing public policies aimed beyond income transfer, but which can generate new jobs in order to provide autonomy.

The current government implemented a New ``Bolsa Família``, the ``Auxílio Brasil``, in which its new value will be R\$ 400.00 (four hundred reais) until the end of 2022. Provisional Measure regarding the ``Bolsa Família`` Program and creates the Auxílio Brasil and the ``Alimenta Brasil`` Programs. In this new income transfer program there are nine different types of benefits. The measure aims to allow better administration of the family budget and financial planning with a view to small businesses and entrepreneurship (FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, 2021).

According to Provisional Measure Number 1,061, of August 9, 2021, the Auxílio Brasil Program has among its objectives to stimulate the emancipation of families in situations of poverty and extreme poverty, mainly through:

- a) the insertion of adolescents, young people and adults in the labor market;
- b) the integration of socio-assistance policies with policies to promote productive inclusion; It is
- c) encouraging entrepreneurship, microcredit and entering the formal job market.

In addition, the Program has among its guidelines the following:

VII - the promotion of training and employability opportunities for beneficiaries, in order to provide autonomy;

VIII - the use of multiple funding sources, including partnerships with the private sector, federative entities, other Public Authorities, multilateral organizations, civil society organizations and other national and international institutions.

Thus, it is possible to perceive that the objectives and guidelines of the new Government Program are directly aligned with the objectives of the Social Businesses, since they seek to promote the independence of the poorest people through the teaching of

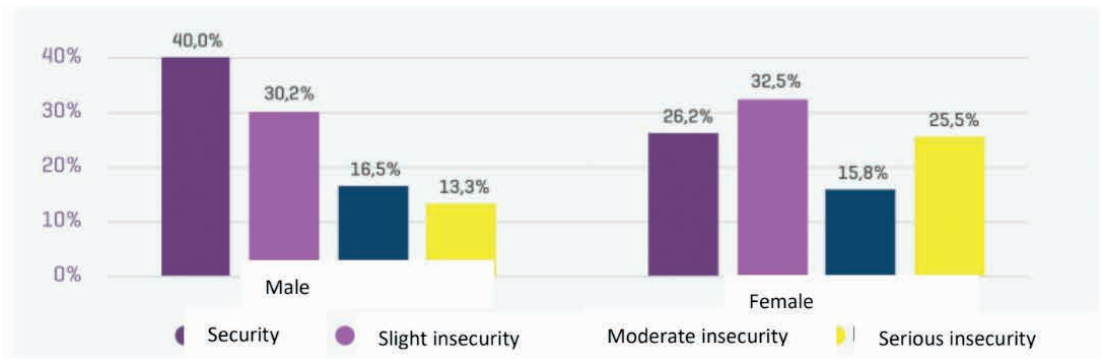


Figure 2 – Graph of the proportion of the food security situation in the households of the interviewees, according to the gender of the person in charge of the household, in cases of sole responsible

Source: GALINDO *et. al*, 2021, p. 25

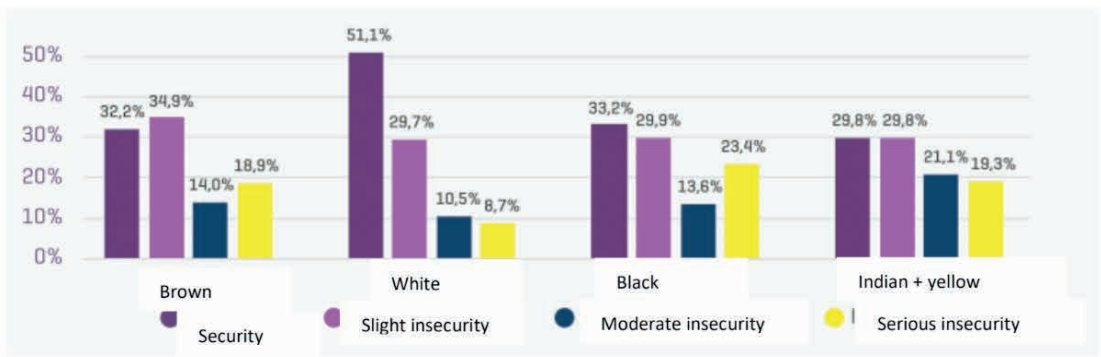


Figure 3 – Graph of the proportion of the food security situation in the households of the interviewees, according to the race or color of the person in charge of the household, in cases sole responsible

Source: GALINDO *et. al*, 2021, p. 25

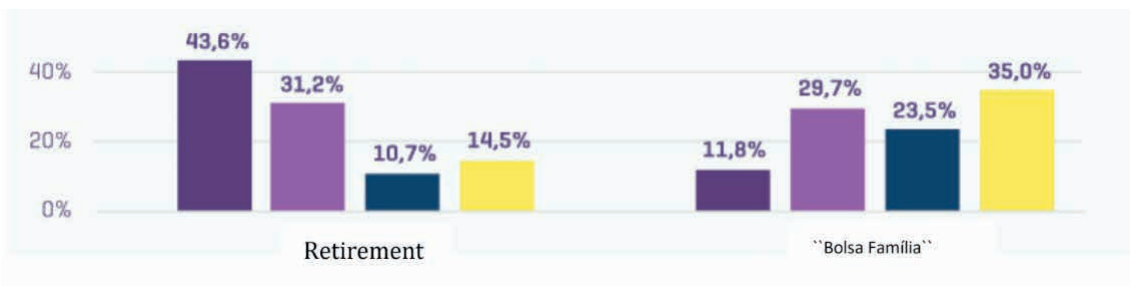


Figure 4 – Graph of the proportion of food security situation in the households interviewed according to receipt of Retirement and ``Bolsa Família`` by at least one resident

Source: GALINDO *et. al*, 2021, p. 25

a new profession and teachings that can help in the improvement of your quality of life.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The present study had the general objective of demonstrating the contribution of Social Business to the reduction of social inequality through the case of GP. It was found that Social Businesses such as ``Gastronomia Periférica`` are not enough to eradicate social inequality in a community, but contribute to its reduction through the various fronts on which they operate, causing a positive impact in different ways that lead to inequality. Furthermore, the contribution of partner companies and civil society is extremely important for the business to be able to reach a greater number of people, despite its financial sustainability.

Food is a basic human need that guarantees a better quality of life, but, in addition, obtaining it is a matter of public health, since its excess or lack can lead to health problems. Talking about food leads us to think about the consequences of its lack, hunger, and it is a global problem that is the second Sustainable Development Goal. The social and economic inequality existing in Brazil and in the world is a crucial factor for access to food.

Peripheral Gastronomy, through teaching a profession and promoting entrepreneurship, gives young people from the periphery a new perspective on life, since the negative stigma that the periphery has and the lack of access to basic rights leads them to disbelieve in better opportunities. This is due to the fact that not necessarily all those who graduate will get a job, so there is a concern to make these students more confident and secure. In addition, through the full use of food, it is shown that it is possible to have quality food and consequently contribute to the reduction of waste, an act that would currently be able to feed the entire population that is starving in the country.

Through the study carried out, it was possible to perceive that the Social Business in question manages to act on several Sustainable Development Goals in which it is proposed. In the eradication of poverty through education and promotion of entrepreneurship; in zero hunger, through the principle of total use of food; in good health and well-being, with food education proposed in the use of the most diverse foods; quality education, through the gastronomy school that allows the student to experience the day-to-day life of a restaurant and have access to different projects such as the one provided by Nespresso; gender equality, by prioritizing the selection of women to take the course, given that studies indicate that they are a minority, thus allowing decent employment and economic growth; reduction of inequalities, through access to education and incentive to personal development; and responsible consumption and production, through raising awareness about the waste of nutrients that are present in peels, butchers and PANCS.

It is hoped that this research will contribute to the study of researchers in the areas of administration, economics, social sciences and political sciences, since Social Businesses are still undertakings under development, but that operate in areas that are extremely important for development. global sustainable. Furthermore, bearing in mind that the principles of the Auxílio Brasil Program are aligned with the work of Social Businesses and their principles, this would be an opportunity for the Government to contribute to the promotion of this new type of enterprise and reach a greater number of people, contributing to their autonomy.

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