



CASE STUDY ON INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC ATTENDANCE SERVICE IN GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OF HEALTH

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Abstract:

This paper presents a study on innovation in the public attendance service in governmental health organizations in which it addresses the assumptions about the relationship between the environment and the individual by the study of the causal relationship, defended by the Contingency Theory of management. This study demonstrates the research, analysis and results obtained through the development and application of scientific methods of qualitative nature, with procedures of questionnaires applying, in loco investigations and a support by a group of focus; the theoretical and conceptual bases on the subject were collected and then confronted with the facts observed in the researched organization; consequently, the improvements initiatives and the adequacy of the process were proposed in order to contribute to the actions of innovation development that seek to improve the performance of activities by the efficient application of the available resources. The results show the description on the behavior of individuals investigated in the context of the processes of attendance service, analyzing the participation of social actors in the interaction with the public body in order to infer in the quality of attendance service in the face of citizen participation in the projects of improvement of this process, following the scientific recommendations applied. The development of this activity will serve as an academic contribution tool for the quality study of the attendance service quality offered by public institutions, once it reports the concepts developed by the analysis of data obtained from employees and service users, in order to diagnose the necessities and opportunities aiming the elaboration of government policies for the process development.

KEYWORDS:

Public Administration; Service; Organization; Process.

1 INTRODUCTION

This subject focuses on the public attendance services, provided by a governmental health sector. It involves steps of the methodology and procedures whose implication aims to understand the innovative actions presented and ways of compliance in the researched institution. The perspective is to seek the quality improve of the current service to the public. The question to be answered here is: What is the contribution of innovation processes to the quality of attendance service in organizations of public health?

This work aims to study the influence of innovative actions in the public attendance service provided by health organizations. To meet this general objective, specific objectives were proposed: (1) analyze the current conditions of service to the public in the research institution; (2) conduct theoretical and conceptual confrontation with the data obtained in research and; (3) introduce measures suitability for the

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quality of service.

2 THEORETIC AND CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

The theoretical constitutions of Administration developed as a result of the questioning of concepts, seeking therefore adjustments on the weaknesses and inconsistencies in existing approaches geared to the best management practices of organizations. Trying to evaluate the models of organizational structures more effective in correlation with the principles of Classical Theory, it is presented as results the development of Contingency Theory that Chiavenato (2003) describes as the exposure of the existence of a functional relationship between environment conditions and appropriate administrative techniques for the effective range of the organization's objectives, which directs its concepts for flexibility and agility, determining that there is no absolutism in organizations. Chiavenato (2003) also describes the organization as a "social entity composed of people and resources, deliberately structured and oriented to achieve a common goal." Overlooking the issue to direct the attendance in a base theory, Chiavenato (2003) also describes the organization as a "social entity composed of people and resources, deliberately structured and oriented to achieve a common goal." Overlooking the issue to direct the attendance in a base theory, we conclude it was better to direct the support in this activity to the Contingency Theory that applies studies related to the correlation between human resources and organizational effectiveness.

2.1 Analysis of public services attendance in government institutions

In this item and its sub items the theoretical insights that involve the attendance to the public as the innovation approach are presented, relating the legal descriptions, bureaucratic and of attendance in the context of the public sphere.

2.1.1 Morality and efficiency principles

Madeira (2008) sets that the moral can be conceived as a set of shared values ?? among members of the community at determined epoch. Thus, it is perceived the role of the morality in the social context, when defines the values ?? that guide the action of the individual, establishing duties for himself through his own consciousness. The author also states that the role of the administrator, to do not configure violation of the administrative morality, should therefore; always concentrate himself at the end desired by the public Administration, which is the common good.

The principles of morality and efficiency were introduced in the Brazilian Constitution by the Constitutional Amendment No. 19, of June 5, 1998. Preaches the duty of the Public Administration as a ruler being in order to manage resources, inputs, people and materials, as well as finance with proper optimization. Thus, it is necessary to use these means to meet the purposes of public interest. Madeira (2008) deals of this principle, discussing that in theory, the efficiency would be neither beginning, but the result of an administrative activity. Efficiency in Public Administration relates to the ability to generate benefits to society with the resources originated from it; thus demonstrates the citizen taxpayer the due respect, as if to give him back the counterparts of these "inputs" or inputs provided by all citizens. Thus, it seeks to avoid waste in the execution of activities, while prioritizes lower costs through the better execution method of the public functions.

2.1.2 The Bureaucracy in public organizations

Weber, creator of bureaucratic concepts based himself on the rationality to develop his ideas in response to the inconsistencies between Classical Theory and Human Relations, with the goal of creating an model of organization that would involve all the variables. Chiavenato (2003) states that the bureaucracy is a form of human organization based on rationality, in other words, the adequation of the goals (ends) intended and Matias-Pereira (2010) defines that in the bureaucratic context, rationality means the quest for efficiency. For Weber (cited Matias-Pereira, 2010), the bureaucracy may be understood as a group of regulations, laws and standards that the employee, supervised by his supervisor, shall fulfill, always respecting the hierarchical structure, which he must obey faithfully and worthily.

Matias-Pereira (2010) discusses two main causes of the distortion of the concept of bureaucracy, the first relates to the centralization and the verticalization of the decisory process, resulting in the slowness of the procedural steps in the hierarchical structure in upward direction and the second is about the lack of flexibility, in other words, obsessive preoccupation to follow rules, with no place to modification. On the other hand, the bureaucratic advantages are guided by the rationality in relation to the achievement of objectives, definition of positions, operations and duties, rapidity in decisory process and channels through which the information about orders, rules and procedure are transmitted. Under these conditions, cites Matias-Pereira (2010) that the work is professionalized, nepotism is avoided and working conditions favour the economic morality and difficult the corruption. Matias-Pereira (2010) also argues that the

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fairness of bureaucratic rules, almost always based on universal standards of fairness and equal treatment, has the virtue of ensuring cooperation, since, the people comply rules mainly because the ends achieved by the entire structure are highly valued. In the studies of Weber, the author also identified dilemmas faced by the bureaucracy that undergoes constant external pressures to force the organization develop different ideas of the rules employed. Accordingly, as describes Matias-Pereira (2010), the organization to be effective, requires a special kind of legitimacy, rationality, discipline and range limitation, which remits to an evaluation of the methods as applied to measuring its effectiveness in meeting the proposed objectives.

2.1.3 Innovation in public management: organization and processes

In face of this impasse described by Weber when dealing with bureaucratic dilemmas, is noticeable to identify the relationship of innovation as one of the factors driving the changes of the rules committed by this administration model. Adair (2010) states that innovation means creating or presenting something new in particular. He combines two main processes that overlap themselves, namely, (1) have new ideas and (2) implement them. Druker (1985 cited Bessant, Pavitt and Tidd, 2005) expressly says that innovation is the specific tool of entrepreneurs, through which they exploit the change as an opportunity for different business or services. It is liable of being presented as a discipline, liable of being learned, liable of being practiced. So, the public organization may develop actions for a innovatory learning process, using the inputs available, such these values, ? ? that should be incorporated by the structure as a whole, involving the various employees that comprise the public mechanism.

The importance of changes in organizational processes happens mainly in response by the adaptation to environmental conditions that surround business organisms. Bessant, Pavitt and Tidd (2005) believe that innovation is an essential process, concerned to renew that the company offers, noting that, in nonprofit organizations the development of innovative actions can be directed to reducing costs and improving quality. Adair (2010) states that organize something is to impose on this element a sequential and/or spatial manner and Bessant, Pavitt and Tidd (2005) complement that understand the innovation as a process is to clarify that the knowledge originated by this process creates the manner how this process is managed and experienced.

As instruments for the execution of administrative processes were established the routines of organizational behavior, according to Levitt and March (quoted in Bessant, Pavitt and Tidd, 2005) are ipse literis, procedures that involve established sequences of actions to perform tasks in a mixture of technologies, procedures or formal and informal strategies, and, conventions or informal habits. These tasks are related to the central competencies of planning, management and evaluation, where the routines of behavior must be integrated in order to constitute the capacity of manageability in the innovation processes. In the relationship of modifications caused by the innovation of the process, we emphasize the difficulties conceived by the presence of routines rooted in government institutions, which entails a blockade to the realization of innovative actions aiming at the improving of the quality of the processes. On this blockade, Bessant, Pavitt and Tidd (2005) state that it is essential from the point of view of the innovation management, not just the building of routines, but also recognize when and how to destroy them and allow to create new ones. The authors add that the effective management of innovation is basically resulting from the design and development of effective routines and learn to do them depends on recognizing and understanding such routines and facilitate its emergence inside the corporation.

2.1.4 Attendance in public organizations

The definition of attendance provided by public organizations is presented as a service of social nature and necessary to respond to the community demand. The Brazilian Service of Support for Micro and Small Enterprises [SEBRAE] is a benchmark in the country to conceptualize the attendance, for it provides support to several companies since the very beginning stage and acts as the assistance organ to improvement of the quality of the processes of these organizations. According SEBRAE (2013), attendance service refers to our judgment value as a whole. Serve is much more than treat. Treat is essential and basic. Serve is to exceed expectations, to surprise the customer. Débora Martins, an expert in the management of the relationship between company and customer and auditor by the National Service for Industrial Apprenticeship in São Paulo [Senai/SP] NBR 9001:20083 that specifies requirements for a Quality Management System, states that attendance is related to any liability that the company places on its employees to meet the client properly, on the right time and satisfactorily.

The issue of attendance in Brazil, especially in the services provided by public organizations, has a notorious shortage related to the processes of excellence and quality. Dantas (2004) argues that poor customer service is not an issue of who execute the attendance, but a management issue, that passes through the training aspect of the service personnel and adequacy of the environment and ends on the ongoing assessment of quality. So, it is clear that broach the attendance service in a individualized manner and of

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responsibility of the one who executes it, is actually delimit itself to identify only one of the agents involved in the process. According Bandeira de Melo (apud Matias-Pereira, 2007), public administration is the offering by the State or its designee, of utility or community aimed at satisfaction of the community, under the regime of public law and in accordance with the public interests. In this respect, it becomes even more noticeable the complexity of the attendance service in these conditions, because of the diversity found in the public to which the service is directed.

2.2 Theoretical and conceptual elements in confrontation with the techniques of attendance service

The development of an organization, especially in the public context, is related to the ability to identify failures and inadequacies within the process, seeking the application of preventive measures and mitigatory in the face of the adequacy of the institution to the processes of management quality. Assess the necessity for change requires, as cited by George and Jones (2011), the recognition that there is a problem and the identification of its cause. In this respect, the theoretical elements presented orient and expand the knowledge levels of the public administrator, who can use tools, previously tested by scientists and experts, to prove the efficiency of the method in order to improve the quality.

2.3 Measures of innovation adequacy in public service organizations

Innovation is a process that integrates the entire organization and, therefore, it is necessary that exists the integration and the work together in order to reach the goals that seek quality and the improve of services. Abreu, Coral and Ogliari (2008) state that the first step to implement a process of management of innovation in the company is to establish an appropriate organizational structure. Thus, it becomes necessary to make a diagnosis of the organization to assess the main variables that make up the innovative process, as well as determine the resources applied to the process of innovation. Lewin (cited in Cameron, 2009) presents a model of the organizational changing process in three steps: unfreeze the current state, then go to a new state through participation and involvement and refreeze and stabilize the new state by establishing new policies and standards and recognition of the success of the process. Organizational change involves the development of a restructuring process that as cited by Cameron (2009) aims to align the organization to perform its best strategy.

3 METHODOLOGY

The methodology can be defined as the set of methods used to perform a search. Siena (2007) describes that method can be understood as the form and the pathway of the manner of think. It is the way to approach the level of abstraction of phenomena. Is the group of processes or mental operations employed in the study. Severino (1941) complements this concept when broaches that science forms itself applying techniques by following and relying on epistemological grounds. In this context, we present the methods used in research as follows.

3.1 Methods and procedures of the research

The method applied in this research has a qualitative nature, according to the recommendations suggested by Flick (2004). We adopted the method of case study as indicated in Yin (2005). For validation of the results it was decided by the support of the group of focus as has been recommended in Pedro Filho (2012), of the Master's Program in Administration from the Foundation of the Federal University of Rondônia.

As procedures, there was a the applying of the questionnaire formulated on the website SurveyMonkey, the questions were multiple choice, so as to allow the measurement data, analysis and critique of the causal relationship. The facts recorded in research were investigated by inference of the matters contained in the printed document, since the public focused of this study did not have access to email or a internet tools to receive the file via internet. The data obtained from the questioning of the actors surveyed were inserted into the platform of the website SurveyMonkey by manual feeding of information, strictly observing the data insertion in identical reference to the written record made ? ? by individuals who responded to the questionnaire. With the data tabulation it was possible to obtain the graphics and the tables of informations to compare the margins of asymmetry and concordance between the responses of individuals in the context of the items investigated.

It was adopted as a further methodological procedures the in loco observation, which allowed us to assess the performance of the actors involved in institutional attendance service with the registry about the local phenomena measured in conformity with the conceptual and theoretical confrontation, measure recommended by Severino (2007); we seeked by means of the study on the "layout" and other factors that compose the environment of the location of the research, the field observations, considering the theoretical bases built in order to perform the comparison between the practices found in the public organism and the

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scientific recommendations raised by research theoretical and conceptual. As from the data group obtained by means of methodological procedures presented, the comparative analysis of the causal relationship was performed allowing so, inferences about the research scenario in order to identify proposals for improvements, adaptations and adjustments, following the recommendations proposed by the social scientists that support the theoretical and conceptual fundamentals of this case study.

3.2 Group of focus

The Group of focus is an instrumental procedure for collection, data capture and information that assist the researcher in the processing, analysis and description of the facts related to the object that is being investigated. Morgan and Freitas (quoted Vergara, 2006) emphasize that the group of focus can be a simultaneous providence to the search procedures when it seeks to stimulate or interact in face of the collect of opinions of the social actors involved in any way with the subject researched. For the purposes of this study the group of focus consists of 15 participants, where seven individuals were appointed from among the employees related to the attendance service of the health system under study, and eight are customers randomly selected; in both cases we seek to obey the protocol of ethics of the Social Research, through informed consent, free acceptance and interest in collaborating with the results of the survey as recommended in Pedro Filho (2012).

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Here the results obtained are presented by means of methodological procedures applied in research that seeks to meet the specific objectives initially proposed in this study. The research was conducted in a health care facility that serves as a center of medical specialties, organ of the prefecture of the city of Porto Velho, state of Rondônia. The government institution was opened in March 2012 as one of the investments made by the government with the management of resources of social compensations arising from the construction of Hydroelectric Jirau located on the Madeira River in Rondônia state. The goal of creating an exclusive unit for concentration of the attendance services in some areas of medical specialties emerged as a mitigatory measure to improve the quality of the services provided to the population, which also serves to a fundamental right that guarantees individuals' access to health. The research developed in this work was directed to the subdivision of medical and statistical files who manages the administrative and attendance issues, which include the reception, instruction and guidance of patients referred by health service stations and from different locations of the city, in addition of other counties in the state. Among the individuals that constituted the group of focus of this research, in Chart 1 are described the characteristics of the group of actors questioned.

Chart 1: Socio-economic profile of the respondents.

Characteristic	Socioeconomic Profile			
Gender	73% Male	27% Female		
Age	40% - 18 a 27 years	26% - 28 a 37 years		
	20% - 38 a 47 years	14% - 48 a 57 years		
Scholarity	6% basic education	33% High school	61% College	
Naturality	80% Northern Region	13% South Region	7% Northeast Region	
Occupation	46% civil servants	26% Students	15% merchants	13% Independent workers

Source: Formulated by the authors based on the research (2013).

4.1 Analysis of public attendance services in the research institution

In order to perform the study on the influence of innovative actions in the public attendance

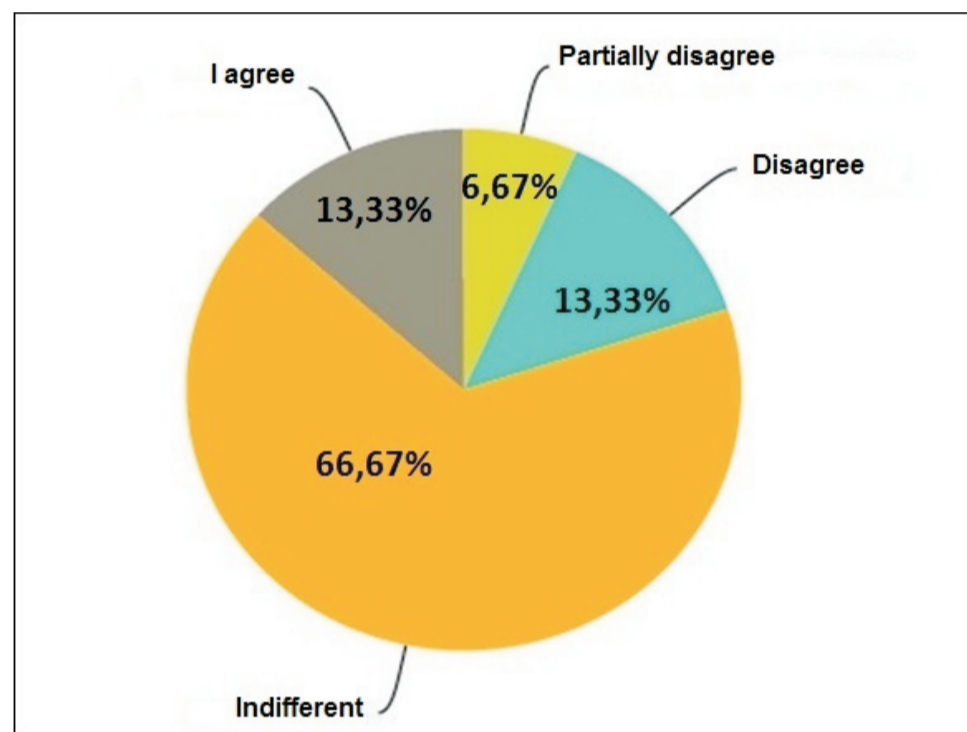
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service provided by health organizations, the obtained data in research in comparison with the theoretical and conceptual bases raised are presented.

4.1.1 Legal principles of morality and efficiency

Through the facts investigated with the social actors involved in the process of attendance service of the researched organization, when asked about the principles of morality and efficiency in order to obtain the opinion of these individuals about the performance of the public administration to serve them and apply them appropriately in the attendance service process it was possible to obtain the results as shown in Graph 1.

Graph 1: Fulfillment of the principles of morality and efficiency.



Source: Survey data (2013).

According to the opinion of the respondents the most part was indifferent to determine whether there is fulfillment and applicability of the principles of morality and effectiveness by the Public Administration. This issue may be related to the ignorance of the principles, that although they were informed at the meeting of the group of focus, they were identified as new elements to the individuals consulted. It is Important to consider the low level of citizenship of the involved as well as their inability of perception about relevant issues that should be incorporated to the routine of the public employees.

4.1.2 The Bureaucracy in public organizations

The factors obtained in this research aimed to identify characteristics of bureaucracy in the organizational environment and obtain the opinion from the users and employees on the role of bureaucracy in the process of attendance service provided by the organization where it was developed the case study for this activity. In relation to the characteristics related to the bureaucracy, are presented in Chart 2 the practices identified by the respondents.

Chart 2: Bureaucratic characteristics in processes of Public Administration.

Process of administration	Description
Planning	Presents rules, policies and regulations; Detailed and in long term;
Organization	Centralized in authority; Formal and with specific responsibilities;
Direction	Directed to the supervision of the tasks performed; Supervision closed;
Control	Directed to ensure the compliance of the procedures.

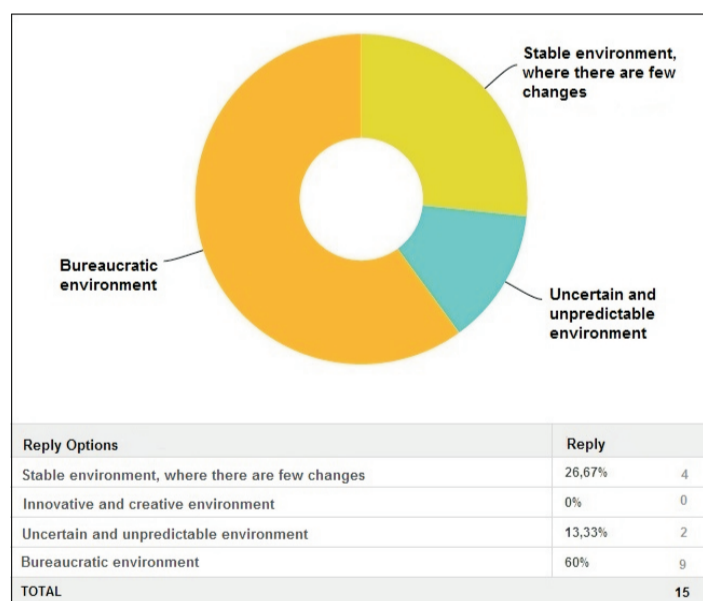
Source: Formulated by the authors based on the research (2013).

When asked about the role of bureaucracy in the processes of attendance service, there was unanimity in the responses, where respondents stated that bureaucratic activity has a negative effect on the process of attendance service, creating obstacles and clutter in the process. The analysis of this question enabled us to identify the association that the respondents create between the bureaucracy and the malfunctions existing in a system or task, where individuals claim that bureaucratic operations generate disorders and damage the provision of the attendance service.

4.1.3 Innovation in public management: Organization and Processes

In this topic we sought to infer about the perception of the respondents regarding to the innovative actions in the environment where the attendance service is conducted to the public. On this question the data were collected, as illustrated in Figure 1. At this question none of the individuals questioned consider the environment in which the attendance service is performed in the organization investigated as an environment innovative and creative, which emphasizes and affirms again the association of the provider institution of this public service as an organization where bureaucratic dysfunctions prevail, since , respondents in this study used the term bureaucracy as a nomenclature of flaws and inadequacies observed and existing service process. In Face of this challenge, most of the individuals studied showed indifference to express their opinion on the level of satisfaction that the attendance service provided to the public provides, demonstrating therefore that there is an identification of dysfunctions, however, the social actor does not express or has a method to evaluate and present measures for a quality attendance service, according to data gathered in the meeting of the group of focus.

Figure 1: Characteristics of the environment where occurs the attendance service to the public.

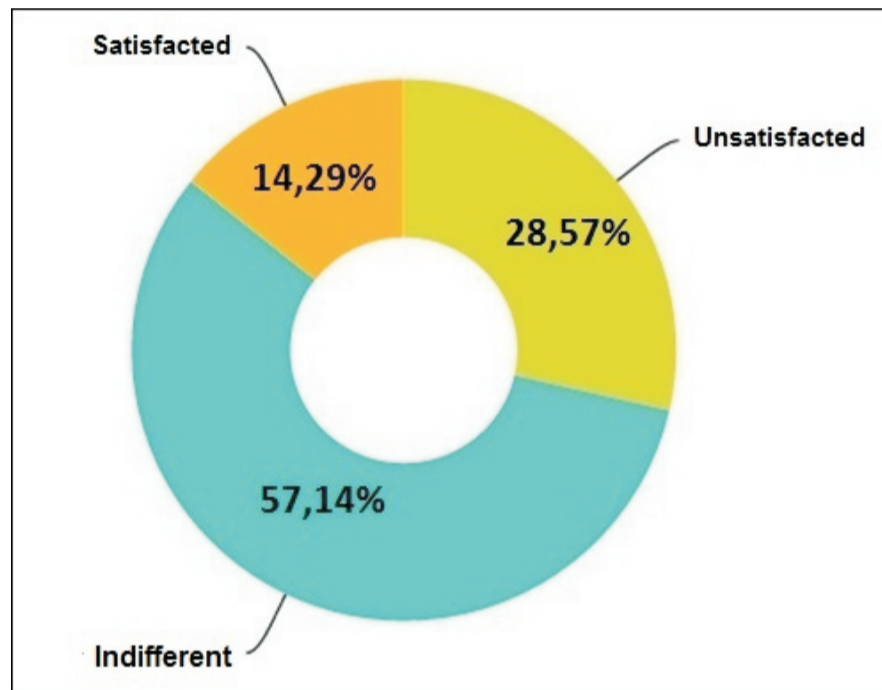


Source: Survey data (2013).

4.1.4 Attendance service in public organizations

In the applied study on the attendance service in the organization focus of this research, we identified the following observations as shown in Graph 3, which shows the level of satisfaction of users and employees with public attendance service; Table 1 summarizes the main factors that influence in the quality of service provided and, Graph 4 illustrates the concepts that the respondents have in identify those responsible for the public attendance service, as follow respectively.

Graph 3: Level of satisfaction with the mode of operation of public attendance services.



Source: Survey data (2013).

Among the identified elements in the research, were cited below the key influencers of the quality in the attendance service provided by public organizations, as shown in Table 1. It is noteworthy in this context that none respondent considers the participation in decisions an influencing factor for the development of the public attendance service activity, emphasizing so an issue previously discussed, that deals with the indifference that social citizens have related to the public processes in which are related to suggestion, analysis and action in face of the problems identified.

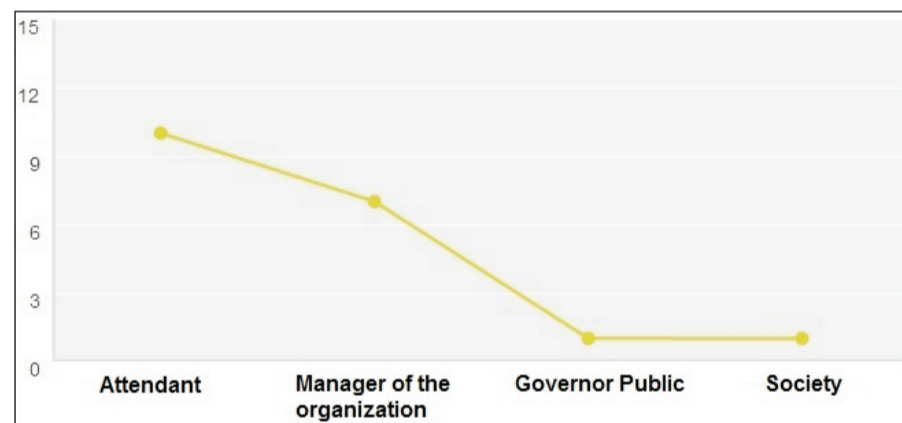
Another point which highlights and provides supports to the considerations of this analysis is presented in Graph 4. According to the analysis of the data in this graph it was possible to reaffirm the opinion of the social actors in relation to the processes of attendance service, since the most of the respondents links the responsibility for the quality of the public attendance service to the agent that provides the service and after to the manager of the organization where the service is provided. In this question was optional to the respondents one or more answers, in order to identify the considerations of the group of focus about the subject. This result appears in contrast with the propositions of Dantas (2004) by asserting that the poor attendance is the result of the actions of the attendant or manager. Dantas (2004) discusses the quality of the attendance service as an element that initiates in the development of people, has continuity in the relationship that individuals possess with the environment and completes itself by the constant evaluation of how the attendance service is conducted. So, it is possible to see that several elements, and not isolated factors, participate in the attendance service process and the group of these elements is responsible for the excellence in attendance

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Reply Options	Reply	▲
Participation in decisions	0%	0
Interval for rest between activities	6,67%	1
Creative and diverse work	20%	3
Job stability	53,33%	8
Physical comfort	66,67%	10
Recognition at work	73,33%	11
Safe working conditions	86,67%	13
Responsibility for the results achieved	86,67%	13
Respondents: 15		

Source: Survey data (2013).

Graph 4: Actors responsible for the quality of the attendance service.



Source: Survey data (2013).

With the study and the conclusion of the analysis it was possible to identify weaknesses and threats that compromise the quality of attendance service provided by public unit and propose improvements and adaptation measures for seizing opportunities and invigorate the strengths found. The theoretical and conceptual confrontation on this research allowed the comparison of the recommendations of experts, scientists and researchers with the practices developed by the organization in its routine. These factors were addressed by the methods initially proposed and thus here the suggestions and considerations of research are presented.

4.3 Proposals for adequacy measures for the attendance service of public organizations

According to the facts raised in loco, coordination of the group of focus and application of research methods were considered proposals for improvements and adjustments, shown in Chart 3.

Chart 3: Proposals for improvements and adjustments to the process of attendance service.

Indicative raised	Description of the measures of adequacy
1 Inadequation in organizational processes	1.1 Analyze the routines and seek, within the public context, simplify the possible processes; 1.2 Disclose the procedures and standards to all employees in order to disseminate the purpose of the organization;
2 Failure in the centralization of the organization	2.1 Inform staff about the organization's hierarchy, clarifying who are the managers or employees responsible for each task;
3 Deficiency by the direction with focus on the task	3.1 Evaluation of the performance of the employees; perception about the motivators of the improvement of the quality of the work.
4 Inadequacy in control	4.1 More formal control of the unit, definition of tasks and deadlines;
5 Rigid environment, inflexible	5.1 Work the actions of Organizational Learning (OL) to utilize the available resources in view of the better performance, encouraging an innovative and creative environment;
6 Lack of maintenance in work environment	6.1 Conservation of the cleaning, care, organization, concern for the public served;
7 Lack of participation of social actors in the process	7.1 Involvement of citizens in the public process, in order to criticize the dysfunctions, but also to contribute to the resolution of these.

Source: Formulated by the authors based on the research (2013).

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In face of the data collected, research and analysis performed it was possible to identify the relationship of the individual in public context and the practices of the attendance service provided by health institutions. In this context when responding to the problematic about what is the contribution of innovation processes to the quality of the attendance services in organizations of public health, it was possible to ascertain that innovation generates benefits in applying the Organizational Learning through the use of available resources in a creative and dynamic manner aiming to improve the performance of processes. Thus, innovative actions can be implemented in the public organizations by the practice of everyday activities with the use of the "inputs" arranged in the organization, which include the development of the human element as a motivator of innovative initiatives. The organization surveyed showed ability to the fulfillment of its activities in relation to the structure, staffing and organization, however, are raised points which were suggested improvement proposals that aim to make the creative work environment and dynamic, since the emphasis of the respondents was pointed to the bureaucratic dysfunctions.

It is presented also that the participation of social actors in the process, exists in order to identify failures and inadequacies, however, the training and the experience with the public sphere to intervene in these relationships in order to modify them, appeared as factor underexplored and developed by the individuals questioned, a situation in which is suggested as a new research topic that could have as a target the study about the citizen participation in collective organism. In short, the realization of the conceptual and theoretical confrontation with the practices developed by the organization allowed beyond the study of the subject proposed, visualize the concepts of users and employees of the public attendance service process, allowing a reflection on the performance of the organization and of the citizen within the scenario researched.

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