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Information Technology and Health Management: The case of the implementation of a computer system for payments of employees in the public sector

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Valeria Romão Pasqualini Nerio
School of Public Health of Ceará Paulo Marcelo Martins Rodrigues - ESP/CE
Master in Collective Health from the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF)
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7392-3450
E-mail: contato@valerianerio.com

Maria Morgana Souza Gomes
School of Public Health of Ceará Paulo Marcelo Martins Rodrigues - ESP/CE
Master's degree in Business Administration from the State University of Ceará (UECE)
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8451-1347
E-mail: morgana14gomes@gmail.com

Jadson Franco
School of Public Health of Ceará Paulo Marcelo Martins Rodrigues - ESP/CE
Ph.D. in Education from the State University of Ceará (UECE)
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3141-4700
E-mail: jadsonfrancomoreira@gmail.com

Claudiane Bezerra Rodrigues
School of Public Health of Ceará Paulo Marcelo Martins Rodrigues - ESP/CE
Graduated in Business Administration from UniFanor Wyden
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3405-0674
E-mail: diane.brodrigues.cr@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
At the School of Public Health of Ceará Paulo Marcelo Martins Rodrigues - ESP/CE, an autarchy of the Secretariat of Health of the State of Ceará - Sesa, the process of payment of scholarships of the institution previously carried out involving the use of paper, being an onerous process, followed by physical processing in the sectors involved in its administrative flow. These work circumstances involved excessive consumption of paper and sometimes rework with pending signatures and physical documents, leading to delays in the payment process. In this context, this article aims to describe the experience of the implementation of the so-called Single Integrated System of Electronic Processing - SUITE in the Health Research Management (GEPES) of ESP/CE, during 1 semester, for the process of payment of scholarships, which represents approximately 83% of the workforce of the sector. It was possible to conclude that the insertion of a computer system optimized the process of payment of employees, with the reduction of 30 days in the time-lapse for the execution of this task, as well as the reduction of 100% of paper used for this type of process, conferring greater efficiency and economy in health management.

Keywords: Information Technology, Health Management, Innovation, Sustainability, Public administration.

1 INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, Law No. 14,1292 of 2021 provides for Digital Government in favor of increasing public efficiency, highlighting the principles of Article 3, of seeking the "use of technology to optimize work processes of public administration", and the "promotion of technological development and innovation in the public sector", items VIII and XXVI, respectively.

The adoption and implementation of strategies involving management and Information Technology to innovate with new proposals or improvements to work processes have become an unavoidable guideline in public service, especially in administrative health services.

According to Pinochet (2011, p. 05) technology "has surpassed the standard processing of data for administrative functions common in all organizations, such as human resources, payroll, and

accounting systems, among others". This stems from the fact that technology can be interpreted as a strategic management tool.

Information Technology from its computerized answers plays an important role to also promote environmental responsibility policies in various types of businesses in the health area. By contributing to the rational use of resources and cost reduction, it becomes a valuable ally for sustainability with management in these different contexts (PINOCHET, 2011).

It is important to highlight that sustainability does not imply abandoning economic thinking, on the contrary, economics plays a key role in the allocation of scarce resources. By adopting a sustainable approach it is possible to balance the need for economic development with the preservation of these limited resources, aiming at a more balanced and conscious future (LUNARDI *et al.,* 2011).

In the context of people management in the public sector, the gains from Information Technology follow the same line. It is possible to implement digital solutions and intelligent systems that can optimize processes in healthcare organizations. This includes implementing administrative process automation practices, such as the one explained in this article.

The experience report was developed by the administrative team of the Health Research Management (GEPES) of the School of Public Health (ESP/CE), between July and December 2022. The idealization of the Single Integrated System of Electronic Processing (SUÍTE) proposes to reduce the use of paper, streamline and bring more efficiency to administrative work, and its implementation is an initiative of the Secretariat of Planning and Management - (SEPLAG) to computerize the administrative processes of the Government of the State of Ceará.

For the implementation of this innovation strategy, the GEPES administrative participated in 05 meetings from May to August 2022, together with the sectors of ESP involved in the process. Initially, for the knowledge of the functionalities and the contribution of the Areas from demonstrations in a *Beta version* [1] for testing the SUITE.

Subsequently, users were created to access the Production SUITE system, a version for its operational use. In August 2022, the opening of processes for the payment of scholarships for GEPES projects by the SUÍTE computer system began. In this initial process, moments of support were needed by the Institutional Development Advisory (ADINS) of ESP/CE, to clarify the flow of the process within the system.

After six months of using the new modality, it was observed by the administration of GEPES the rapid obtaining of signatures on documents electronically by the SUITE. It was also verified the anticipation of opening the payment processes by the previous meeting of their documentation. The

[1] [Informatics] Trial version and before the final version of a program. Source: Online Dictionary of Portuguese - DICIO, 2023

action was able to anticipate in 30 days the Commitment phase that culminates with the Payment phase, thus optimizing the phases of Request, Prioritization, and Commitment in the Integrated Monitoring System and Programs - (SIAP Guardian), SEPLAG's financial system.

It is concluded that the insertion of the SUITE enabled the computerization of the process of payment of scholarships from the Health Research Management, which symbolizes about 83% of the workforce of the sector and provided the reduction of the execution time of this process. However, in the case of a recent experience, new evaluations are necessary after a longer period of use of the SUITE by the GEPES administrator, as well as the expansion of the study with other sectors of the ESP/CE, enabling a better understanding of the effects of this innovative tool on the Institution's scholarship payment processes.

In short, it is verified that by adopting electronic systems for the operationalization of administrative processes, Information Technology allowed reducing the use of paper by 100% in the payment process of the sector, contributing to the preservation of forest resources and the reduction of waste generated. In addition, it facilitates the access and analysis of information, enabling more informed and conscious decision-making regarding sustainability.

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