

The Health District meets Citizens: the analysis of the information needs aimed to the service improvements

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INTRODUCTION

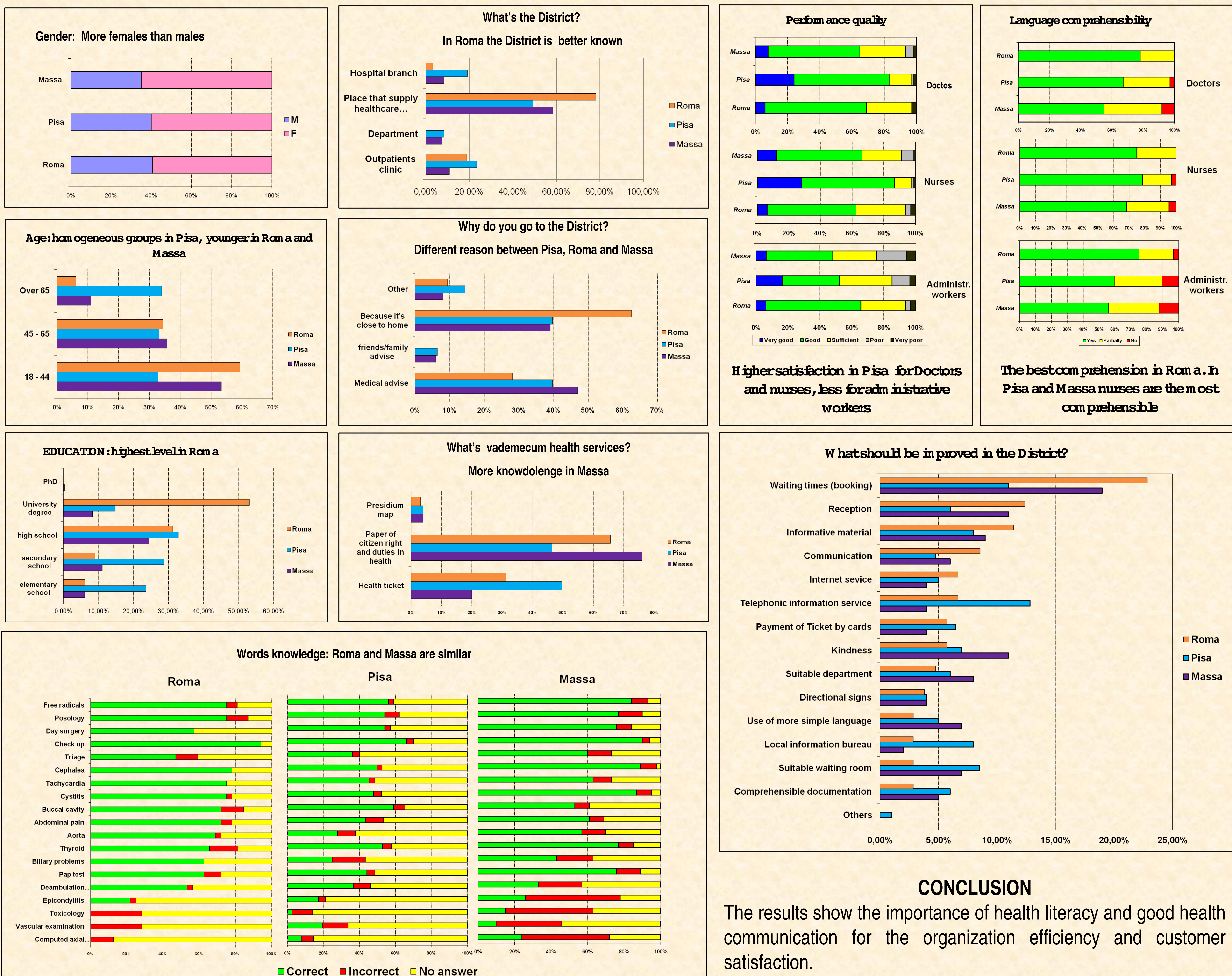
The primary care Italian territorial organization is based on Health Districts aimed to guarantee the widest diffusion of Public Health services among citizens. Nevertheless, the efficiency of this organization is affected by difficulties often coming from a poor knowledge of people and lack of communication strategies. For these reasons the CARD association and the Health Communication Observatory of Pisa University, undertook a survey aimed to evaluate the Health literacy, the specific District knowledge and the customer satisfaction.

METHODS

A structured anonymous self administered questionnaire was designed and tested on 806 subjects recruited in 3 towns: Rome and 2 cities in Tuscany (Pisa and Massa). The questionnaire was divided in three sections: 1) general information (sex, age, education level), 2) health literacy (medical words understanding), 3) specific knowledge about District organization and customer satisfaction.

RESULTS

The gender distribution was 60% female in the three sites. About age and education level the Pisa sample was the oldest and the less educated. The Rome's one was the youngest and the most educated. According to these data, the assessed Health Literacy resulted higher in Rome, followed by Massa and Pisa. The specific knowledge on District organization and customer satisfaction followed the same order. The main causes of poor satisfaction were the very long waiting lists, the scarce information about healthcare services, the lack of communication between patients and operators and the administrative procedures.



CONCLUSION

The results show the importance of health literacy and good health communication for the organization efficiency and customer satisfaction.