Portuguese adults' health status perception

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Introduction and Aim

Health status perception is a general indicator of physical and psychological well-being and reflects different lifestyles' variables.

The **aim** of this work was to evaluate the determinants of health status perception among the Portuguese adult population.

Participants and Methods

Data from the study "Portuguese Population's Food Habits and Lifestyles" were used. A national representative sample of 3529 Portuguese adults was interviewed at home between February and April 2009. Health status was evaluated by the EQ-5D (Szende et al. 1997). The EQ visual analogue scale rates the subject's own assessment of their health status (0 = *worst imaginable health*; 100 = *best imaginable health*). Physical activity was evaluated by the International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ; Craig et al. 2003). The present analysis is carried out in 2811 subjects due to incompleteness of 718 records.

A binary logistic regression model was computed to estimate the odds of lower perception of own health status (EQ visual analogue scale under the median) among Portuguese adults according to their sex, age and education level, civil status, professional occupation, region of residence, BMI category (WHO 1998), physical activity level, smoking habits and problems identificated in each of the EQ-5D dimensions (mobility, self-care, usual activities, pain/discomfort and anxiety/depression) (OR adjusted for all other variables).

Results and Discussion

Portuguese adults show high health status perception, being the median on the EQ visual analogue scale of 80. According to our data, only 7.0% of the Portuguese adult population rate their perception of own health status below the middle point of the scale.

Older, underweight (vs. normal weight), widowed (vs. married), unemployed (vs. active) and living in any region except North were found to have a lower perception of health status. The presence of problems in three of the five EQ-5D dimensions (mobility, pain/discomfort and anxiety/depression) was also associated with lower perception of health status (Table 1).

To our knowledge this is the first study to assess the perception of health status in a representative sample of Portuguese adults. Future research should explore the causes of lower health status perception being associated with demographic characteristics.

References

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Table 1. Determinants of lower health status perception.

	Health status Mean	OR (95%CI)	OR adj. (95%CI)
SEX			
Female	74.8	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Male	77.9	0.786 (0.681 0.908)	0.935 (0.763 1.147)
AGE			
18 - 29 years	85.6	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
30 - 44 years	80.9	1.972 (1.574 2.471)	1.691 (1.207 2.370)
45 - 64 years	72.7	4.726 (3.831 5.832)	2.987 (2.086 4.277)
≥ 65 years	62.6	14.300 (10.942 18.687)	4.389 (2.597 7.416)
EDUCATION LEVEL			
< 4th grade	59.1	14.024 (8.590 22.897)	1.863 (1.022 3.398)
4th grade completed	66.2	4.025 (3.126 5.182)	1.224 (0.864 1.734)
6th grade completed	73.4	2.369 (1.765 3.180)	1.143 (0.794 1.645)
9th grade completed	79.3	1.261 (1.006 1.579)	1.079 (0.824 1.414)
12th grade completed	81.9	0.823 (0.662 1.022)	1.098 (0.844 1.429)
Bachelor/universitary	80.0	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
CIVIL STATUS			
Married	75.7	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Single	83.7	0.393 (0.329 0.469)	0.895 (0.664 1.205)
Seprated/divorced	73.1	1.455 (1.120 1.890)	1.323 (0.968 1.807)
Widowed	61.2	5.000 (3.695 6.765)	1.590 (1.079 2.344)
PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATION			
Active	79.1	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Student	87.3	0.353 (0.273 0.456)	0.981 (0.666 1.444)
Unemployed	74.4	1.923 (1.432 2.582)	2.570 (1.797 3.675)
Housewife/househusband	67.1	3.636 (2.578 5.130)	1.217 (0.769 1.926)
Retired	64.1	4.609 (3.725 5.702)	0.905 (0.619 1.324)
REGION OF RESIDENCE			
Norte	82.9	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Centro	72.6	3.091 (2.497 3.826)	4.364 (3.363 5.663)
LVT	72.1	2.559 (2.142 3.056)	3.657 (2.891 4.625)
Alentejo	74.0	1.940 (1.361 2.765)	1.792 (1.157 2.776)
Algarve	70.7	3.061 (1.930 4.854)	4.744 (2.769 8.129)
Madeira	71.2	3.050 (1.837 5.063)	4.177 (2.297 7.594)
Açores	76.7	1.862 (1.102 3.144)	2.157 (1.147 4.056)
BMI CATEGORY			
Underweight (< 18.50)	75.0	1.371 (0.755 2.489)	2.201 (1.087 4.457)
Normal (18.50 - 24.99)	80.0	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Pre - obesity (25.00 - 29.99)	73.9	1.878 (1.607 2.195)	1.208 (0.977 1.494)
Obesity (≥ 30.00)	68.7	3.571 (2.748 4.641)	1.304 (0.927 1.835)
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVEL			
High	79.0	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Moderate	76.7	1.240 (1.046 1.469)	1.241 (0.997 1.544)
Low	72.2	2.071 (1.697 2.527)	1.149 (0.881 1.499)
SMOKING HABITS			
Never smoked	76.1	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Ex - smoker	72.8	1.338 (1.082 1.655)	0.999 (0.763 1.309)
Smoker	78.8	0.750 (0.632 0.891)	1.241 (0.997 1.544)
MOBILITY			
No problems	79.0	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Some/severe problems	55.1	23.755 (14.872 37.944)	5.027 (2.916 8.667)
SELF CARE			
No problems	77.2	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Some/severe problems	52.6	19.874 (8.977 43.996)	1.603 (0.608 4.225)
USUAL ACTIVITIES			
No problems	78.1	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Some/severe problems	56.1	10.844 (7.180 16.377)	1.075 (0.624 1.854)
PAIN/DISCOMFORT			
No problems	81.2	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Some/severe problems	62.9	7.525 (6.189 9.151)	2.699 (2.100 3.470)
ANXIETY/DEPRESSION			
No problems	79.6	1 (reference)	1 (reference)
Some/severe problems	65.9	4.297 (3.568 5.175)	2.520 (2.009 3.160)