

## ORIGINAL PAPER

International Journal of Caring Sciences, 1(2):58–65

# Determination of factors influencing perceived health status among poor and non-poor women in eastern Turkey

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**BACKGROUND:** Socio-economic status, income, gender, education, and individual and cultural differences influence the perceived health status. Perceived health is important as it enables individuals to be sensitive to changes in their health, and heralds the presence of diseases before their signs and symptoms appear.

**AIM:** This study was conducted to determine factors that may account for variations in perceived health status between poor and non-poor women.

**MATERIAL-METHOD:** The study was conducted in Kars, a city located in the eastern part of Turkey, and included a total of 420 women (210 poor and 210 non-poor).

**RESULTS:** The non-poor women had better living conditions and did not have to struggle to make a living. There was a significant difference ( $P < 0.01$ ) in health perception between the poor and non-poor populations, with 78.1% of the poor women and 43.4% of the non-poor women having a bad to moderate perception of health. Among the poor women, chronic diseases ( $P < 0.01$ ), age ( $P < 0.05$ ) and monthly income ( $P < 0.05$ ) significantly affected perceived health status; education, marital status, smoking and health insurance had no significant impact on perceived health status ( $P > 0.05$ ). Among the non-poor women, education ( $P < 0.05$ ), chronic diseases ( $P < 0.01$ ), age ( $P < 0.05$ ), monthly income ( $P < 0.05$ ) and health insurance ( $P < 0.01$ ) significantly affected perceived health status; marital status and smoking did not affect the perceived health status ( $P > 0.05$ ).

**CONCLUSIONS:** The results of this study indicate that perceived health status, an important indicator for actual health status, is affected by poverty.

**KEY-WORDS:** Poverty, women's health, perceived health, nursing