

Measuring Health or Health Status

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Objectives

After this session you should;

- Be able to understand what is meant by health
- Understand how health is measured
- Understand why we measure health

Health

- World Health Organization (WHO) definition of Health
 - “Health is the state of complete physical, psychological, social and spiritual well-being and not merely the absence of disease”
- Patrick and others (1982) define health as “an individual’s level of function”

Health

- Health is 2 dimensional
 - Quality and Time
- Health has value in use and not exchange
- No market for health
- Derived demand
- Health determined by a number of factors. Examples?

Healthcare?

- Health care is exchangeable
- health care has a market
- Derived demand (Intermediate good)
- Health care is produced by the health system

Some indicators of health

- Life expectancy
- Mortality
- Morbidity
- Height for age and weight for age
- Health-Related Quality of Life

Life Expectancy

- Average length of life a newborn can expect to live, if current death rates do not change
- Mostly used health status indicators
- Life expectancy at birth can increase due to improving living standard, better education, access to quality health services etc.

Mortality and Morbidity

- Mortality is the number of deaths in a particular population
- Morbidity is the burden of disease or ill health in a population

Height and weight for age

- Average height and weight for a particular age
- Both height and weight can be affected by nutrition
- Lack of good nutrition can lead to low height-for-age (Stunting) and also low weight-for-age (Wasting)

Health-Related Quality of Life (HRQoL)

- Defines how well a person functions in their life and their perceived wellbeing in physical, mental, and social domains of health
- HRQoL also measures the value of health, i.e. health values assigned to different health states

HRQoL

- Pain, mobility, some problems caring for oneself and severe anxiety
- HRQoL expressed as a fraction lying between 0 (death) and 1 (perfect health)
- How do we estimate a value of health lying between 0 and 1?

HRQoL

- How would you value your current HRQoL between 0 and 1?
- Four health state methodologies used to value current health status

Valuing HRQoL

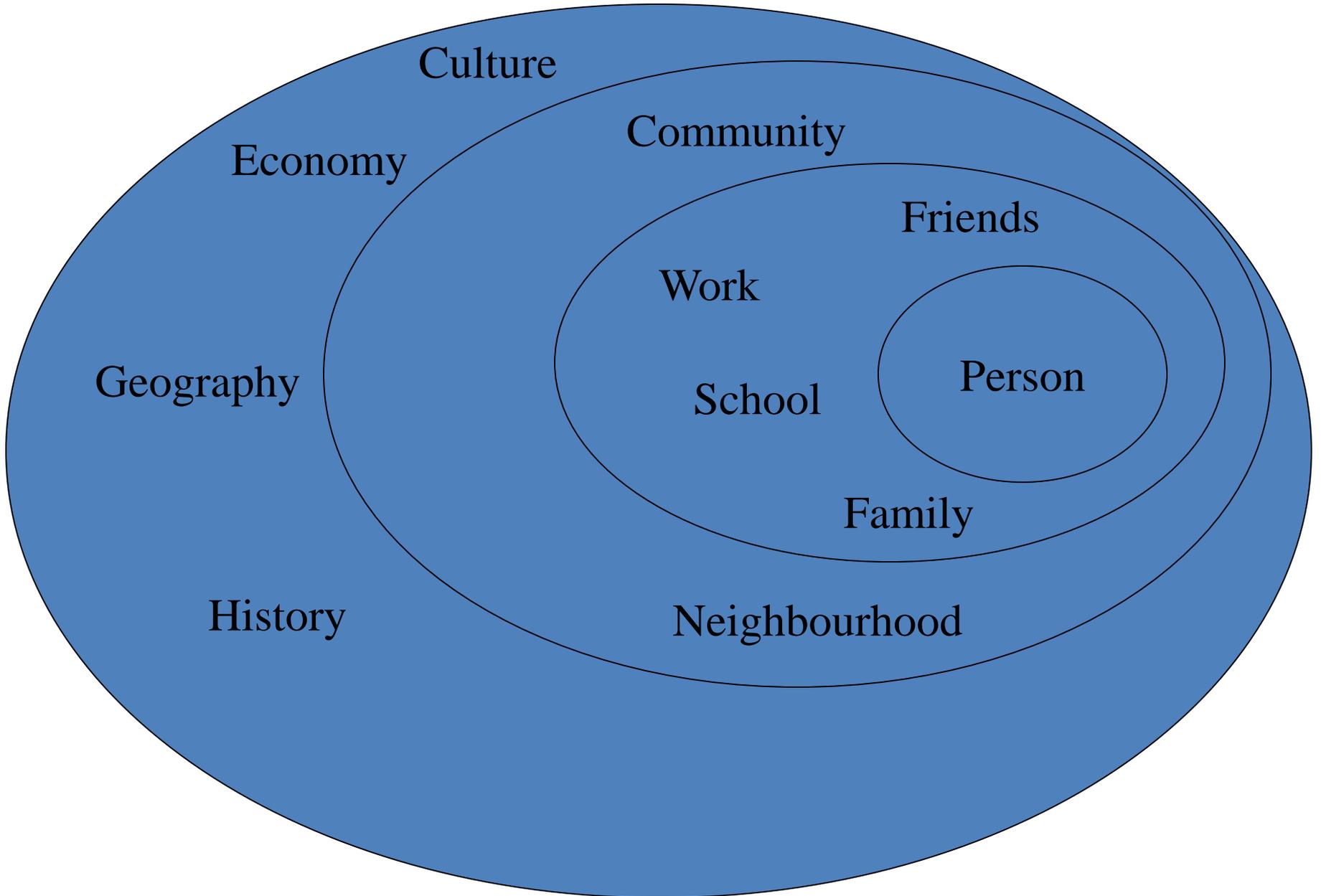
- Direct measurement methods
 - Visual analogue scale
 - Standard Gamble
 - Time Trade-off
- Indirect measurement methods
 - Generic utility instrument
 - EQ-5D

Determinants of health

Health is influenced by:

- The biological environment
- The physical environment
- The social and cultural environments
(including spiritual, political and economic factors)

Determinants of health



But why measure health?

- Health as human capital
- Health affects education and cognitive ability
- Health and savings
- Health related to wealth and economic growth

Questions?