

# **What determines population health? Making the best use of literature to structure a multicriteria population health index**

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Population Health (PH) is a complex concept affected by multiple dimensions that are within and outside the scope of the formal health care system. Evidence-based decision-making relies on Health Research Methods such as Systematic Literature Reviews, much used in the health context, to assemble fragmented data. These methods are laborious, time consuming and subjective to the reviewers interpretation.

To face these challenges, both in the domain of Population Health and in the techniques to analyze it, a multimethodology was developed that enables a transparent and more automatic review of studies, provides a less reviewer dependent process and increases reliance on technical tools. The ultimate goal of the present work was the analysis and translation of fragmented evidence, on what determines population health, into a structured format.

The multimethodology is composed by 3 stages: a Preliminary Literature Review, for collection and synthesis of the literature, a Content Analysis, to identify dimensions and their structuration, and Systems Mapping, to shape the validated evidence into a Systems Map.

The application of the multimethodology to the concept of PH allowed the achievement of valuable insights. Income and Education were found to be central dimensions in the context of PH; several other relevant dimensions were identified and their separation into nuclear or marginal dimensions was possible. The more present areas were identified as well. Some evidence was found about the type of relationships between dimensions. Directions and polarities were established. Additional research should be done, for further understanding of this concept.