QCA and Fuzzy Sets – Research Applications and Software Tools
Summer term 2013
Wednesday, 12 noon – 2 p.m.

Contact
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Office hour: Monday at 2 – 3.30 p.m. in PEG – 3.G 1 14 (please, register at the door)
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Content
Set-theoretic methods have become a more common research strategy in the social sciences. Both sociological and political scientists produced an increasing amount of studies in the last years using ‘Qualitative Comparative Analysis’ (QCA). The possible applications reach from the macro level, i.e. mostly country comparisons, down to micro level studies analyzing individual actors’ behavior.

In this course, the focus is on recently published applications of QCA in the fields of sociology and political science, and, beyond that, the actual usage of QCA as both a research approach and a data analysis technique.

Thus, one part of the course will be on discussing QCA-using studies in the social sciences that are published in high-ranked journals in order to identify good applications, methodological shortcomings and different solution illustrations.

Second, next to the literature based part this course involves a computer-assisted part. The participants will get to know the most commonly used software tools for both crisp set and fuzzy set QCA. In doing so, they will be able to replicate the studies under scrutiny.

Third, the participants will design a QCA application their selves already under the course. In working groups they will develop of a research questions, collect appropriate data, and finally, perform a QCA using one of the software tools presented.

The aim of the course is to make use of the participants’ theoretical knowledge gained in the accompanying seminar on “Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Fuzzy Sets” by Prof. Wagemann. Thus, attendance in his course is mandatory.

Almost all relevant texts for the course are taken from high-ranked international journals in the fields of sociology and political science. All texts can be found on the website.

Credit
This course can be credited for the M.A. in sociology (“SOZ-MA-1”); the M.A. in political science (“PW-MA-4” and “PW-MA-7”); the Diploma and Magister studies in sociology and political science (“HM”); and the Master in International Studies / International Peace and Conflict Research (“IS-MA-1”).

The course is held in English. The knowledge of the English language will not be a criterion for the grading.

Code of Conduct
At least 10 out of the 13 sessions have to be attended (on time!), both for a certificate of participation (Teilnahmeschein) and for full credit (Modulprüfung). Furthermore, every participant has to present and criticize at least one published QCA study (3-5 minutes, see course readings, p.3-4) and to write both an abstract (150-200 words) and a short assignment (2 pp.). In order to get full credit, the participants have to write their own QCA assignment (Hausarbeit) that bases on the empirical data collected under the course (length: 20-30 pp., due on 30 September 2013).
Course Readings
Next to the relevant texts of the single lectures, every participant has to choose two texts from the published studies mentioned below, one using crisp-set QCA, the other one using fuzzy-set QCA. NB: Each text can just be chosen by two people. You can early-bird-register for texts at my office hour (see above). The remaining texts will be allocated in the first lecture. Note that you will be ‘responsible’ for your texts all over the semester regarding each step of analysis.

Course Plan

1. Week 17 Apr - Introduction, Course Organization

2. Week 24 Apr - State of the Art in QCA – Research Applications & Software Packages
   Reading:
   Schneider, Carsten Q. and Claudius Wagemann (2010). “Standards of Good Practice in Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Fuzzy-Sets”. **Comparative Sociology** 9: 397-418.

No session on 1 May (International workers’ day)

3. Week 8 May - Data Calibration in Crisp Set QCA (TOSMANA)
   Readings:

4. Week 15 May - Data Calibration in Fuzzy Set QCA (fsQCA 2.5)
   Readings:

5. Week 22 May - Truth Tables/Truth Table Analysis
   Readings:
   Freitag/Schlicht 2009, Kim/Lee 2008, Krook 2010, AND:

6. Week 29 May - Truth Table Algorithm/Logical Remainders and TOSMANA
   Relevant Texts:
   Kim/Lee 2008, Krook 2010

7. Week 5 Jun - Truth Table Algorithm/Logical Remainders and fsQCA 2.5
   Relevant Texts:
   Emmenegger 2011, Freitag/Schlicht 2009
8. Week  12 Jun - **Research Lesson I – From Idea to Research Question**

9. Week  19 Jun - **Research Lesson II – From Data to Set Memberships**

10. Week  26 Jun - **Research Lesson III – From Analysis to Findings**

11. Week  3 Jul - **QCA and Stata**

   **Reading:**

12. Week  10 Jul - **QCA and R**

   **Reading:**

   **Relevant Text:**

13. Week  17 Jul - **Final Discussion/Colloquium**

**Literature**


Schneider, Carsten Q. and Claudius Wagemann (2010). "Standards of Good Practice in Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Fuzzy-Sets". *Comparative Sociology* 9: 397-418.

Applications using csQCA


Applications using fsQCA


