

Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) in a Nutshell – Approach, Technique & Application

Workshop at the Università di Siena

Dipartimento di Scienze Sociali, Politiche e Cognitive & CIRCaP

Markus B. Siewert, Goethe University Frankfurt

22 June 2017, 2 p.m. (Seminar I)

5 July 2017, 2 p.m. (Seminar II)

Presidio Mattioli – Room to be announced

Brief Description

Set-theoretic thinking and approaches currently experience a boom across various disciplines and subfields of the social sciences (Goertz/Mahoney 2012; Mahoney/Goertz 2006; Mahoney/Vanderpoel 2015). Among the broader family configurational methods, Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) in its various variants (crisp-sets, fuzzy-sets, or multi-value) is surely the leading proponent offering a formalized approach to comparative research which differs from regression-based techniques in its set-theoretic perspective, i.e., the utilization of sets and the search for necessary and sufficient conditions (Ragin 2008, 2013; Schneider/Wagemann 2012). The aim of the workshop is to give a brief introduction to the core underpinnings of QCA – i.e., sets, configurative thinking, equifinality, and asymmetry – and the technicalities how to conduct a QCA using software (fsQCA, Ragin/Davey 2014; QCA in R, Dusa 2016) based on empirical applications. The workshop also offers space for more general methodological discussions and ideas for own studies applying QCA.

Workshop Dates

- 22.06.2017; 2:00 pm onwards: *Introductory overview about QCA and its central notions*
- 05.07.2017; 2:00 pm onwards: *Empirical examples and applications*

Introductory Literature

- Mahoney, James and Gary Goertz (2006). A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research. *Political Analysis*, 14(3), 227-249.
- Mahoney, James and Vanderpoel, Rachel Sweet (2015). Set Diagrams and Qualitative Research. *Comparative Political Studies*, 48(1), 65-100.
- Ragin, Charles C. (2013). New Directions in the Logic of Social Inquiry, *Political Research Quarterly*, 66(1), 171-74.
- Wagemann, Claudius (forthcoming). Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Set Theory. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, ed. William R. Thompson, published online.
- A searchable database of journal articles using QCA from various fields of research can be found at <http://www.compass.org/bibdata.htm>.

Software

- fsQCA3.0 by Ragin and Davey 2014 (<http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~cragin/fsQCA/software.shtml>).
- QCA by Dusa 2016; runs in R. Thus, please install R (<https://www.r-project.org/>) and R studio (<https://www.rstudio.com/>). A training script for conducting QCA in R will be provided prior to the workshop.

Short Bio

Markus B. Siewert is an academic researcher at the Department of the Social Sciences at the Goethe University Frankfurt, and currently visiting fellow at the Dipartimento di Scienze Sociali, Politiche e Cognitive, and the CIRCaP. His methodological expertise lies in the field of case-oriented research approaches and set-theoretic techniques such as QCA but also process tracing, typologies, comparative historical analysis, and concept formation.