

PGR Course unit outline 2022/23

Unit code:	BMAN 80062
Title:	Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)
Credit value:	5
Semester:	2
Course Coordinator contact details:	Matti Jaakkola AMBS, Room 3.129, matti.jaakkola@manchester.ac.uk Office hours: By appointment
Other staff involved contact details:	None
Pre-requisites	None.
Co-requisites	None.
Dependent course units	None.
Restrictions	None. This course can also be taken for audit purposes only.

Course unit overview

Drawing upon set-theory and configurational thinking, Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) enables analysis of social phenomena in terms of set relations. As an approach, QCA can be seen as an innovative analytic instrument to conduct cross-case analysis with keeping a strong focus on the underlying cases. It is a useful addition to the methodological toolkit for qualitative and quantitative researchers alike.

This is an introductory course; it is designed for people who have no or limited experience with QCA.

Aims

This course unit aims to provide an overview of set-theoretical approaches in general, and QCA in particular. It also offers hands-on training with the fsQCA software.

Objectives (Learning outcomes)

On completion of this unit successful students will be able to:

- Understand the potential value of QCA approach, and position the methodology in the context of qualitative and quantitative methodologies
- Understand how a QCA study can be designed, under which conditions, and for what purposes
- Explain how to conduct a QCA study and understand the mechanisms and logics on which the analyses are based
- Use fsQCA software for data analysis and understand how to interpret and report the results
- Critically evaluate published QCA research

This unit also aims to enable students to produce a publishable QCA of their own. Even if they do not directly apply QCA, students should still be able to apply the discussed concepts and methodologies in their own research.

Syllabus content

1. Introduction to set-theoretic approaches and QCA
 - Positioning the approach; potential value and limitations
 - Necessity and sufficiency of conditions
 - Calibration

- Truth tables and logical minimisation
 - Parameters of fit
2. Hands-on practice using fsQCA software (<https://www.socsci.uci.edu/~cragin/fsQCA/software.shtml>)
- Introduction to the software
 - Data preparation
 - Analysing data
 - Interpreting and reporting results
3. Concluding topics
- Robustness checks
 - Different types of QCA and extensions to QCA
 - Good QCA practices and critical evaluation of published work

Methods of delivery

Pre-reading	8
Workshop	8
Independent Study	34
Total Study Hours	50

Reading List

Pre Reading:

- Fiss, P.C., 2007. A set-theoretic approach to organizational configurations. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(4), 1180-1198.
- Ordanini, A., Parasuraman, A. and Rubera, G. (2014) When the recipe is more important than the ingredients: A qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) of service innovation configurations. *Journal of Service Research*, 17(2), 134-149.
- Frösén, J., Luoma, J., Jaakkola, M., Tikkanen, H. and Aspara, J. (2016) What counts versus what can be counted: The complex interplay of market orientation and marketing performance measurement. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(3), 60-78.

Core Text:

- Schneider, C.Q., and Wagemann, C. (2012) *Set-theoretic methods for the social sciences: A guide to qualitative comparative analysis*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ragin, C. (1987) *The Comparative Method: Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*, Berkeley: UoC Press.

Supplementary Text:

- Vis, B. and Dul, J. (2018) Analyzing relationships of necessity not just in kind but also in degree: Complementing fsQCA with NCA. *Sociological methods & research*, 47(4), 872-899.

A number of relevant books and articles on a range of disciplines are available at:
<https://compasss.org/bibliography/>

Assessment

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Mode of Assessment	Length required	Weighting within unit
<p>Assessment is for those requiring unit credits (please make this clear to the tutor at the start of the elective)</p> <p>The assignment consists of developing a well-argued plan for using set-theoretic approaches (e.g. QCA) in your own research. You will be asked to critically discuss, among others, (a) what is the problem that you attempt to solve, (b) why is QCA a justifiable approach to address the problem, (c) how would you design and operationalise the study, and (d) how would you make sure that your manuscript gets published.</p>	1,500 words	
Resits: Same as the original assignment.	1,500 words	

Feedback methods

Feedback to students

As a means for formative feedback, students can set up a meeting with the course co-ordinator to discuss their progress prior to submission.

Written feedback will be provided for the assignment within 15 working days after submission.

Feedback from students

In addition to the course unit evaluation questionnaire, students are encouraged to give feedback through emails and conversations at any time, and using the online questionnaire near the end of the semester.

Social Responsibility

AMBS aims for our graduates to develop not only academic and professional skills, but also a sense of social, ethical and environmental responsibility towards the societies of which they are part. Please give details of how social responsibility is addressed in your course unit by highlighting any knowledge or skills that support students' social and ethical understanding and conduct.

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Please indicate by ticking the box(es) below, which specific aspect of SR your module is linked to:

☐

A UN SDGs*

☐

Environmental Sustainability

☐

Other (please specify)

** If a UN SDG, please note which one by reviewing the list [here](#)*

For additional support on how embed SR into your module, please review the resources here:

<https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=51837>

<https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=47017>