Sage webinar 23/02/23

How to code, analyse and visualise qualitative information about causal connections with Causal Map

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So what is causal mapping?
Causal mapping: a long tradition

Axelrod 1976
Bougon 1977
Ackermann / Eden
Laukkanen 2012
Across social sciences, humanities and beyond

https://www.causalmap.app/resources

It's been around forever but researchers haven't used it much

It helps you make sense of completely unstructured, emergent data
A causal map

Someone claims some kind of causal influence
Two causal maps from two different sources

- Beliefs held by P
  - B → C → E
  - C → D → F

- Beliefs held by Q
  - C → E
  - D → F
Two causal maps combined to make one causal map

Causal mapping doesn’t create new causal information (“causal inference”). It helps you organise all the causal information you already have.
Data collection for causal mapping

Primary or secondary
Sources: comparable or heterogeneous
  - Documents
  - Key informant interviews
  - Focus groups
Many sources (5-50)
Many claims
Variable quality
Unsophisticated causation
Emerging / inductive
Getting causal claims from text in causal QDA

Traditional QDA: make connections between non-causal themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text and quote</th>
<th>Theme / tag</th>
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<tr>
<td>… after that it was different because Covid meant that we spent more time at home …</td>
<td>Covid</td>
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Causal QDA: natively causal

<table>
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<th>consequence</th>
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... after that it was different because Covid meant that we spent more time at home ...
Qualitative

❌ not primarily interested in modelling the world
✅ we map *what people think* about the world
Organise and edit hundreds of factors!

Health behaviour; understanding of germ theory
Healthier babies/children
Ill-health
Improved health
Improved health and hygiene practices
Improved health and hygiene practices; brush teeth
Improved health and hygiene practices; drink clean/treated water
Improved health and hygiene practices; increase number of baths/washes
Improved health and hygiene practices; live in clean environment (house)
Improved health and hygiene practices; no longer go to the toilet in a house
Improved health and hygiene practices; use better toilets
Improved health and hygiene practices; use mosquito nets
Answer research questions by applying filters
Each link contains a verbatim quote and has information about source.

Source: Jo
Quote: Covid meant that we spent more time at home
Causal Map: wrap-up
When to choose Causal Map for your research

You want to cut to the chase: causal questions
You have a lot of only semi-structured narrative data from many sources
You want compelling visuals telling a mostly left-to-right story
Your research questions are like this:
• How do different stakeholders think the world works?
• What kind of causal structures do people use when explaining why things happen?
• Do women and men think the same?
• How much evidence is there for the paths to outcome Y, from intervention X1?
• How much evidence is there for any path to outcome Y, from intervention X1, compared to intervention X2?
Features

✅ Powerful (open-source) causal-mapping-specific algorithms and filters
✅ Share maps and specific filters with others online
✅ Calculate and tabulate key network metrics and causal mapping metrics
✅ Export all of your data as Excel
✅ Autosave, restore any past version

(❌ Need good internet connection, only plain text, no systems modelling)
How Causal Map differs from other tools

Causal Map

☑️ Natively causal QDA, dedicated causal analysis filters

Other QDA tools (create tags then add links as a second step)

Quirkos, Dedoose, Nvivo, …

Other causal mapping tools (but not QDA)

CMAP3, Decision Explorer

Network viz tools (import and visualise coding done elsewhere)

Gephi, Kumu.io, diagrams.net …

Participatory systems mapping (create a systems map together)

PRSM, Sticky Studio, Cauzality …

Barefoot causal mapping (free, good for small problems)

Code links in Excel, Powerpoint, pencil and paper …
# Subscriptions

50% off coupon for annual subscriptions!

SAGECM23

causalmap.app/subscriptions

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<th>Package</th>
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Keep in touch!

Get signed up at causalmap.app
We will let you know about future webinars
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Most times, what you really want to know is what causally influenced what. Causal mapping helps you cut to the chase.

It helps you make sense of completely unstructured, emergent data
Like Nvivo, but natively causal

It brings participant voices to the forefront
It’s like systems mapping but constructed systematically from what individuals think, not the group

It’s a transparent way to synthesise stories

It’s been around forever but researchers haven’t used it much
Causal mapping doesn't create new causal information. It helps you organise all the causal information you already have.

It’s thoroughly qualitative but it helps you answer research questions directly.
You get an empirical theory of change