

Qualitative Comparative Analysis in Business and Management Research

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Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and its various extensions have risen to prominence and have become frequently used methodologies within the realm of Information Systems (IS) research. Originally introduced in the social sciences, QCA emerged as a bridge between qualitative case-oriented strategies and quantitative variable-oriented approaches. This unique hybrid methodology allows researchers to consider cases as configurations of interconnected variables, offering a more nuanced analysis than traditional research methods might allow.

By making use of QCA and its extensions, researchers can analyze complex causal relationships, especially in scenarios where multiple conditions can lead to a single outcome. This characteristic, known as equifinality, is in contrast to conventional methodologies that often operate under the assumption of uniform causality. Additionally, QCA recognizes conjunctural causation, where different combinations of conditions can lead to the same outcome. Such an understanding is vital in the current interconnected and dynamic world of digital platforms and ecosystems, where operating based on simplified causal and leaner relationships can be often misleading. Furthermore, QCA's emphasis on configurational logic allows it to capture the holistic nature of cases. Instead of focusing on isolated variables, QCA evaluates configurations of conditions, providing a comprehensive view of the case landscape. This perspective is particularly valuable in the realm of IS research, where intricate systems often interplay in unpredictable ways.

In recent years, the application of QCA has expanded beyond its traditional realms, finding audience in diverse areas such as business, management, technology adoption, organizational studies and specifically information systems. The technique's adaptability, combined with its rigorous analytical framework, has made it an invaluable tool for scholars seeking to unravel the intricate causal relationships that underpin modern digital phenomena. Especially crucial in the digital age are the advancements in QCA methodologies, techniques, and software tools. With the wide availability of data in digital platforms, these advancements enable researchers to analyse vast

datasets, extracting both theoretical insights and actionable recommendations. The applications of QCA and its extensions in various sectors, notably finance, healthcare, and technology, prove its robustness and relevance in addressing contemporary challenges, specifically as they relate to various digital phenomena.

The main research area that this minitrack emphasizes is the use of QCA in analyzing complex causal relationships in IS adoption and implementation. As businesses and organizations become increasingly reliant on digital platforms and systems, understanding the interaction of the large number of related factors that contribute to successful IT adoption becomes paramount.

A great example showing the importance and applicability of QCA in IS research is the paper titled "Customer Review Analysis of Online E-commerce Platforms — A Configurational Approach". This research utilizes Fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (FsQCA), to delve into online customer reviews. By analyzing 3500 customers' reviews, the research identifies key aspects of the online shopping journey that influence customer sentiment. The research underscores the significance of taking a holistic approach to understand customers' interactions with e-commerce platforms. Through its novel application of FsQCA in combination with aspect-based sentiment analysis in e-commerce research, this research not only contributes to academic discourse but also offers actionable insights for e-commerce platforms aiming to enhance customer's shopping and interactions with e-commerce platforms. The findings shed light on the complex interplay of variables throughout the purchase process, offering multiple pathways for businesses to ensure positive customer sentiment and satisfaction.

The insights from this research, as well as the broader discussions within this minitrack, underscore the pivotal role QCA plays in advancing IS research. By providing a lens to understand intricate causal relationships, QCA offers scholars and practitioners a robust toolset to address the challenges and opportunities in the rapidly evolving digital landscape.