Exploring Concept Mapping and Q-sorting as a Combined Mixed Methodological Approach
Dialogue

Systematic investigation of subjectivity

Mutual Understanding

Different Perspectives

- Concept Mapping

- Q-methodology
Both methods...

- Use quantitative techniques to investigate subjective perspectives
- Place *participants* at the center of the research process
- Represent perspective of the *participants*, not *researchers*

In order to...

- Identify a common conceptual organization that reflects and integrates the perspectives of all participants
- Explicitly describe the unique perspectives held by different participants
Thereby

- Developing a nuanced understanding of the concept
- Enabling expression and discussion of different intersectional perspectives

Both methods..

- Start with a *list or concourse*
  - A set of items that represents the domain of interest
  - E.g., list of different types of photos posted on social media
List or Concourse

• Photographs on Social Media
  – A photo of me showing my style (for example, hair, clothes, nails, tattoos or piercings)
  – A photo that promotes an event
  – A photo of my bedroom
  – A photo of me with close friends
  – A photo of me with an alcoholic beverage in my hand at a party ....

Q-methodology Task

Sort the items according to a ‘focus question’:

*How comfortable would you be to share a picture like this on social media?*
Q-Methodology (Stephenson)

Goal to identify the different subjective perspectives on the issue
- Variant of factor analysis that identifies separate groups of participants who sort items in different ways
- Results identify different subjective perspectives on the issue
Concept Mapping Task

Put the items into groups in any way that makes sense to you.

Concept Mapping Analysis

• Goal is to identify the common conceptual structure – e.g., types of photographs
  • Cluster items into groups that reflect items commonly grouped together
  • Results reflect the clustering of all participants
  • End result is a map showing item clusters and identifying how ‘close’ they are to each other
What do we learn?

- Integrating the results
  - Do the clusters they identify match the items that define the individual perspectives?
  - Do different groups rate the types of photographs differently?

How groups AND individuals understand the issue
Thank-you!

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