

METHODS WORKSHOP

Title

Social Network Analysis

Presenter

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Abstract

Network analysis is used to analyze relationships among individuals or among groups. It allows you to measure characteristics of social networks and to map the relationships. It offers a way to study the environments in which individuals, families, and organizations are embedded. It lends itself well to social work research because it can be applied at multiple system levels, such as individuals, families, organizations, and nations. Network data are gathered concerning relationships and their characteristics and exchanges. Network analysis has been applied to research on theoretical concepts such as social capital, social support, inter-organizational collaboration, diffusion of innovations, and the spread of contagious diseases and unsafe health practices. Network analysis has the potential to add significantly to social work research and can be used along with typical quantitative and qualitative data for a combined analytic approach. Results of network analysis have direct implications for a variety of social work interventions at multiple levels.

Topics addressed in the workshop include:

- Types of data used in social network analysis
- Methods for collecting social network data
- Types of analysis used
- Interpretation of results obtained in network analysis
- Software used in network analysis
- Application of network analysis to a various fields of research including public health, organizational and inter-organizational relationships, community leadership and community organization, mental health, and substance abuse.
- Examples of network analysis research in various fields of study

At the end of this workshop participants will be able to.....

1. Distinguish between typical data sets and network data sets.
2. Identify types of exchanges and characteristics defined in network data.
3. Explain how network data can be used in research on relationships and on environments related to topics in the field of social work.
4. Identify several methods of analysis used with network data.
5. Interpret results of network analysis.
6. Draw implications for practice from results of social network analysis.
7. Apply principles of social network analysis to an area of research.

Career Level and Prerequisites

No prerequisites required. Participants who would like to use software for analysis of large network datasets should have some experience with software programs and datasets. Preference is for participants who are interested in applying network analysis to an area of research.

Methods and Approach

Power Point, handouts, discussion, examples. Discussion of software for network analysis.

If participants would like time for individual consultations, they can be arranged with the instructor outside the scheduled workshop time.

Presenter Bio

Susan A. Murty is Associate Professor at the School of Social Work at the University of Iowa. She served as Coordinator of the MSW Program from 2002-2008. She developed the specialization in end-of-life care which is now part of the MSW curriculum at the school. She received a Social Work Leadership Development Award from the Project on Death in America to develop this curriculum. She was President of the National Rural Social Work Caucus from 1994-1998. Her areas of research specialization include rural service delivery, domestic violence, intergenerational service learning, and oral history. She has led several immersion travel study seminars in Latin America and is currently engaged in oral history research with elders in Mexico and in Iowa. She has research experience using network analysis in research on inter-organizational relationships focusing both on ego networks (relationships directly connected to an individual) and on complete networks. She has used ethnographic methods of analysis and also software analysis of large networks using UCINET. Awards received include Distinguished Professor Award, School of Social Work, University of Iowa; Collegiate Teaching Award, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Iowa; Emerging Scholar Award, Association for Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA).