

## **Report on workshop on exploring social dynamics and trajectories using new development in sequence analysis**

University of Manchester  
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*Convened by Gindo Tampubolon and Mike Savage*

The purposes of the workshop are

- [i] to introduce and broaden the appeal of sequence analysis to UK academics;
- [ii] to take stock and identify ways forward in its applications;
- [iii] to engage UK academics by showing its use in Stata and by helping them envision their substantive research in sequence analysis terms; and
- [iv] to present substantive or comparative papers.

Participants of this workshop then went on to set up a JISCMail mailing list for sequence-analysis. This should carry forward the momentum generated in the workshop. Other leading researcher in the area has also been in touch with us as a result of the workshop.

Participants were also exposed to new developments both in terms of, *a*, the need to reflect on links between causality and description using sequence analysis and *b*, new algorithms as alternatives to Optimal Matching, which hitherto was almost synonymous with sequence analysis.

The UK academic community is being made aware of the potentials inherent in this method (see also previous workshop in Essex, 2007) and how it can be used in a wide variety of investigations. Papers in leading journals, e.g. Journal of the Royal Statistical Society and Social Science and Medicine, have published pieces using sequence analysis in the last two years. These are not only applications but also new methodological developments of sequence analysis.

Methodological comparative papers were also presented which compares *different techniques* (aligning and non-aligning techniques) within sequence analysis as well as different methods (latent class growth models and sequence analysis) which can be used to examine social dynamics. Substantive comparative papers were presented to examine intergenerational life histories and labour market trajectories of youths in Europe.

The fact that some participants took up the methods as they are available in Stata and continue to engage via the mailing list should be encouraging to UK academic community.