

Are causal analysis and system analysis compatible approaches?

Russo, Federica (2009) Are causal analysis and system analysis compatible approaches?.

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Abstract

In social science, one objection to causal analysis is that the assumption of the closure of the system makes it too narrow in scope, that is it only considers 'closed' and 'hermetic' systems thus neglecting many other external influences. On the contrary, system analysis deals with complex structures where every element is interrelated with everything else in the system. The question arises as to whether the two approaches can be compatible and whether causal analysis can be integrated into the broader framework of system analysis. This paper attempts a negative answer on the grounds of fundamental differences in their assumptions and suggests using system analysis as a post hoc comparative tool.

Keywords: Causal analysis, system analysis, causation, causal modelling

Subjects: [General Issues: Causation](#)

ID Code: 4823

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Deposited On: 05 August 2009