

Causal Models in the Social Sciences

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Causal models are formal theories stating the relationships between precisely defined variables, and have become an indispensable tool of the social scientist. This collection of articles is a course book on the causal modeling approach to theory construction and data analysis. H. M. Blalock, Jr. summarizes the then-current developments in causal model utilization in sociology, political science, economics, and other disciplines. This book provides a comprehensive multidisciplinary picture of the work on causal models. It seeks to address the problem of measurement in the social sciences and to link theory and research through the development of causal models.

Organized into five sections (Simple Recursive Models, Path Analysis, Simultaneous Equations Techniques, The Causal Approach to Measurement Error, and Other Complications), this volume contains twenty-seven articles (eight of which were specially commissioned). Each section begins with an introduction explaining the concepts to be covered in the section and links them to the larger subject. It provides a general overview of the theory and application of causal modeling.

Blalock argues for the development of theoretical models that can be operationalized and provide verifiable predictions. Many of the discussions of this subject that occur in other literature are too technical for most social scientists and other scholars who lack a strong background in mathematics. This book attempts to integrate a few of the less technical papers written by econometricians such as Koopmans, Wold, Strotz, and Fisher with discussions of causal approaches in the social and biological sciences. This classic text by Blalock is a valuable source of material for those interested in the issue of measurement in the social sciences and the construction of mathematical models.



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