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Accounting for complex environmental exposure situations: a classification approach

Benoît Lalloué1,2,3,4, Jean-Marie Monnez3,4, Cindy Padilla1,2, Wahida Kihal1, Denis Zmirou-Navier1,2,5, Séverine Deguen1,2
1 EHESS Rennes, Sorbonne Paris Cité, France
2 Lorraine University, CNRS UMR 7502, Institut Elie Cartan, France
3 Inserm, UMR 1085-IRSET (Institut de recherche sur la santé l’environnement et le travail), France
4 Lorraine University, INRIA, CNRS UMR7502, BHS (INRIA Nancy - Grand Est / IECN), France
5 Lorraine University Medical School, France

Background

- Everyone is constantly exposed to several environmental exposures with positive or negative health effect.
- Studies which consider this complex environmental setting are rare.
- There is a scientific and political call for a realistic and “holistic” approach of cumulative exposure.
- There is a need for methods able to handle cumulative exposures.

Study design and data

- Lyon metropolitan area (1.2 million inhabitants, 527km²), France
- French census blocks (2000 inhabitants on average)
- Environmental exposures groups:
  - NO₂ annual concentration (2 variables)
  - Noise levels (3 variables)
  - Traffic exposition (2 variables)
  - Industrial proximity (4 variables)
  - Green spaces (2 variables)

Results (MFA)

- The four first components explain respectively 30%, 15%, 13% and 11% of the total variance
- Major components interpretation:
  - 1st: air pollution and traffic proximity
  - 2nd: industrial proximity
  - 3rd: noise and green spaces

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<th>3</th>
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<td>5.06</td>
<td>1.04</td>
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<td>Noise</td>
<td>15.97</td>
<td>13.23</td>
<td>68.00</td>
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<td>Industrial Proximity</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>78.34</td>
<td>5.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traffic Proximity</td>
<td>32.22</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>1.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green Spaces</td>
<td>19.71</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>24.74</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Contribution of each groups to the three first components (in %)

Figure: Lyon metropolitan area cumulative exposure categories created by HC

Results (HC)

- HC applied on the 10 first components of the MFA
- 5 cumulative exposure categories have been created using HC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>≈</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>--</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+++</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industries</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green spaces</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Categories’ characteristics (from +++ extremely higher than average to --- extremely lower than average, ≈ near the average value)

Conclusion and perspectives

- Data analysis technics can help to obtain insight about the different exposure profiles in an area with easily performed and interpreted tools
- This approach can help stakeholders to identify areas of higher “environmental burden”
- As a perspective, extend to other areas and indicators of living environment (public transport accessibility, health professionals density, primary good store availability …)