

Resum de Tesi Doctoral



UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA DE CATALUNYA
BARCELONATECH

Escola de Doctorat

DNI/NIE/Passaport	<input type="text"/>
Nom i cognoms	<input type="text" value="Elena Poli"/>
Títol de la tesi	<input type="text" value="Can Social Capital help Indian smallholder farmers?
Analysis of its impact on rural development, agricultural efficiency, production and risk."/>
Unitat estructural	<input type="text" value="Instituto Universitario de Investigación en Ciencia y Tecnologías de la Sostenibilidad"/>
Programa	<input type="text" value="Sostenibilidad"/>
Codis UNESCO	<input type="text" value="630706"/> <input type="text" value="630702"/> <input type="text" value="510201"/> <input type="text" value="631008"/>

(Mínim 1 i màxim 4, podeu veure els codis a <http://doctorat.upc.edu/gestio-academica/impresos/tesi-matricula-i-diposit/codis-unesco>)

Resum de la tesi de 4000 caràcters màxim (si supera els 4000 es tallarà automàticament)

This research project intends to investigate empirically the potentials of Social Capital to act as a mechanism to improve the performance of India's small-holder agriculture. The study employs both a qualitative and quantitative research approach. The qualitative analysis aims to provide initial empirical evidence of the relationship between social capital, smallholder's production costs and long-standing production constraints. Results indicate that all three dimensions of social capital i.e. collective production, information sharing and trust and mutuality, are significant in explaining farmers' production costs and productivity levels, representing a vital determinant of poor smallholder performance. The quantitative part of the analysis is then set out to provide a two-fold contribution to the state of knowledge on social capital: assess the effect of Social Capital on productive efficiency on one side and assess its impact on farmer's vulnerability and output risk on the other. The first line of investigation uses a stochastic frontier analysis to analyze the contribution of social capital to the productive efficiency of small-holder Indian farmers. To our knowledge, it is the first time that social capital is investigated into its separate functional parts from this analytical viewpoint, using a parametric approach. Results from this part of the research suggest that higher levels of technical efficiency are obtained when small-holder farmers use higher levels of social capital. Specifically, the aspects of social capital that greatly influence efficiency and productivity levels are information sharing and collective production. Following the research findings, efficiency ratings are also positively correlated with social capital levels. Moreover, the strengthening of social capital result to be particularly effective in improving productive efficiency of less educated and less experienced/younger farmers. By the second line of investigation, this research contributes to the academic literature offering the first study to analyse empirically the impact of social capital on production risk in a developing country's setting. The effects of social capital on the productivity and the riskiness of India's smallholder agriculture are explored using the Just-Pope (1978) production function. Our results suggest social capital to be the input with the highest contribution to productivity after labour. Another interesting result is that social capital can be risk increasing, even when its effect on risk improves farmer welfare. This is a very interesting research topic, given the magnitude of social, institutional, economic and technical constraints faced by this category of farmers who have trouble increasing conventional input use such as land, capital, labour, etc. In this context, social capital may enhance agricultural production where other conventional inputs are hard to improve. Our findings could be particularly useful in providing policy makers with clear guidelines to identify and mobilize local social capital in order to effectively improve the sustainability of Indian agriculture and its impact on poverty.

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