Resilient strategies in Southern Europe: towards a smart and sustainable rural development?

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“Resilient strategies in northern and southern Europe: towards a smart and sustainable rural development?

1. What is “resilience”?  
2. Are we using properly the concept-s and its dimensions?  
3. What are the conditions to be resilient?  
4. Resilience to what?  
5. Resilience for whom?  
6. What is a resilient strategy? How to detect it?  
7. How can we measure resilience? What system of indicators?  
8. What are the ingredients of a resilient strategy?  
“Resilience?”
Resilience: use and abuse?

- Initially formulated in the natural sciences
- But embraced enthusiastically by the social sciences

“Migration process” from engineering, ecological and evolutionary approaches: (Martin, 2012; Davoudi, 2012; Scott, 2013)
The early need to revisit the concept

- Initially formulated in the natural sciences
- But embraced enthusiastically by the social sciences
  “Migration process” from engineering, ecological and evolutionary approaches: (Martin, 2012; Davoudi, 2012; Scott, 2013)
- A complex and confusing concept

The concept of resilience revisited
Siambabala Bernard Manyena
First published: 13 November 2006

Abstract
The intimate connections between disaster recovery by and the resilience of affected communities have become common features of disaster risk reduction programmes since the adoption of The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015. Increasing attention is now paid to the capacity of disaster-affected communities to ‘bounce back’ or to recover with little or no external assistance following a disaster. This highlights the need for a change in the disaster risk reduction work culture, with stronger emphasis being put on resilience rather than just need or vulnerability. However, varied conceptualisations of resilience pose new philosophical challenges. Yet achieving a consensus on the concept remains a test for disaster research and scholarship. This paper reviews the concept in terms of definitional issues, the role of vulnerability in resilience discourse and its meaning, and the differences between vulnerability and resilience. It concludes with some of the more immediately apparent implications of resilience thinking for the way we view and prepare for disasters.
Need to avoid uncritical application of “resilience” to social systems

- Initially formulated in the natural sciences

- embraced enthusiastically by the social sciences... and being applied to a wide types of social systems

- Some reasons using “resilience” in social systems:
  - To better explain how social systems face shocks-crisis (?)
  - To better define strategies to recover from shocks-crisis (?)

- Many reasons to be cautious about the uncritical application of resilience thinking to social systems and contexts

Cheshire, Esparcia & Shucksmith (2015)
Need to cautious thinking on the application of “resilience” to social systems
Some critical elements working with “resilience”

Commentary

Resilience to What? Resilience for Whom?

Susan L Cutter

First published: 17 April 2016  Full publication history
“Resilience” ... and rural development?
"Resilience"... and rural development?

Number of peer reviewed papers with related terms in the abstract

1978 - 2016 (décadas)
N=1078

2010 - 2016 (años)
N=828 (77 %)

Source: ProQuest Database
“Resilience” and rural development?

Number of peer reviewed papers with related terms in abstract

- “Resilience” + “rural” + “development”
  N=100

- “Resilience” + “rural development”
  N=8

Source: ProQuest Database
“Resilience”... and rural development?

“Resiliencia” + “rural” + “desarrollo”

N=4
“Resilience”... and rural development

- Resilience thinking being applied to a wide types of social systems in rural development

The Welsh Marches: resilient farmers? Exploring farmers’ resilience to extreme weather events in the recent past

Rebecca Griffiths and Nick Evans
University of Worcester (United Kingdom)

Sustainability, resilience and agency in intensive agricultural enclaves

Andrés Pedreño*, Carlos de Castro**, Elena Gadea* and Natalia Moraes*
*University of Murcia (Spain)
**Autonomous University of Madrid (Spain)
Key aspects and some questions coping with “resilience”

Disasters / shocks → Rurality as “disaster”? Rurality as permanent situation of crisis?

Vulnerability → “Risk to ...”

RESILIENCE → “Capacity / ability to deal with...”
“Vulnerability and Resilience: two dimensions of rurality” (D. Freshwater, Soc. Ruralis, 2015)

Most (?) rural areas (different ruralities)
rural is not synonymous with decline.
But, many of them are highly vulnerable (?)
Rurality = vulnerability (?)

Some rural areas: live them in a permanent shock (?)

What - territorial - capital to respond?
- Economic
- Human
- Social
- Cultural
- Natural

Diagram:
- Vulnerability (forward looking)
- Event or Shock
- Response to Shock (resilience)
- Risk mitigation strategies
  - Probability of a shock
  - Range of magnitude of the shock
  - Current conditions
  - Resilience capacity
  - Economic
  - Human
  - Social
  - Cultural
  - Natural

Shock types:
- natural event
- policy change
- economic shock
- insecurity
“Vulnerability and Resilience: two dimensions of rurality” (D. Freshwater, Soc. Ruralis, 2015)

1. -Traditional- strategies for development of rural areas
   - Specialisation: nevertheless, high vulnerability?
     ➔ Responses?

2. Two standard recommendations for new –territorial- rural development
   - **Diversification**
     - Small economies: limited capacity to diversify (lack of local market, labour supply, etc.)
     - What are the new sectors with lower risk?
   - **Clusters**
     - Because the inter-links the risk of a firm or sector may affect to the whole cluster. It is not a strategy to reduce risk
Thus, how rural regions may approach resilience?: **selfprotection**

- **Selfprotection**
  - Strategic view of vulnerabilities (and potential risks) instead to wait and response risks individually and just after
  - Keys for resilient strategies
  - Generation of sufficient resources to manage risk ← period of high average level of growth

There is “No best strategy”: each region has different tolerance for risk because different
a) Exposure to risks;
b) Abilities to mitigate risks (social component).
“Community resilience, social capital and territorial governance” (L. Cheshire, J. Esparcia, M. Shucksmith, AGER, 2015)

Resilience: a wide concept; in rural regions:

- Risk management perspective (top-down? Need to be highly institutionally embedded? ➔ High risk to don’t implement a proper strategy at rural regional scale ➔
- Rural community resilience: “responding to shocks from the local” ➔
- Endogenous factors
  - Competences: strong social networks – ”networked resources” (social capital –trust-, local institutions, self-efficacy, sense of community) ➔ sharing and mobilising resources facing shocks
  - Adaptative capacities
- Not only endogenous factors: structural processes linked to availability of economic resources, economic growth, access to information and knowledge, etc.
“Community resilience, social capital and territorial governance”

- Community resilience, social capital and territorial governance. Lynda Cheshire, Javier Esparcia and Mark Shucksmith.
- Are local action groups, under LEADER approach, a good way to support resilience in rural areas? Francisco Martínez Arroyo, Hugo Sacristán López and José Luis Yagüe Blanco.
- Is the community-based management of natural resources inherently linked to resilience? An analysis of the Santiago Comaltepec community (Mexico). María del Mar Delgado-Serrano, Roberto Escalante and Saul Basurto.
- Family farmers as agents of resilience in the western region of Santa Catarina (Brazil). Rudinei Kock Exterckoter, Clécio Azevedo da Silva and Antoni Francesc Tulla Pujol.
- Sustainability, resilience and agency in intensive agricultural enclaves. Andrés Pedreño, Carlos de Castro, Elena Gadea and Natalia Moraes.

http://ruralager.org/es/
“Community resilience, social capital and territorial governance”

- **Community resilience, social capital and territorial governance.** Lynda Cheshire, Javier Esparcia and Mark Shucksmith.

- **Are local action groups, under LEADER approach, a good way to support resilience in rural areas?** Francisco Martínez Arroyo, Hugo Sacristán López and José Luis Yagüe Blanco.

- **Women's eco-entrepreneurship: a possible pathway towards community resilience?** Marta Pallarès-Blanch.

- **Sustainability, resilience and agency in intensive agricultural enclaves.** Andrés Pedreño, Carlos de Castro, Elena Gadea and Natalia Moraes.
“Are LAGs a good way to support resilience in rural áreas?” (F. Martínez Arroyo, H. Sacristán, J.L. Yagüe, AGER, 2015)

Third block: Have the LAGs already contributed to, or are they contributing to, the resilience of the rural environment? How are they doing this? By overcoming the social break-up, depopulation, environmental conservation and/or contributing to economic diversification? If this is the case, can the LAGs be the necessary actors to help resilience in the rural environment?

1. 18 %: YES
2. 40 %: national and regional governments “don’t believe in LEADER” as instrument to face risks & uncertainties and to improve resilience or rural communities;
3. 65 %: local communities consider LEADER as useful instrument contributing to face rural shocks;
4. More than 50 % of LAGs were doing efforts to improve local competences (better facing shocks and designing better strategies for the future?) →
5. nevertheless only 26 % did clear changes to better face the economic crisis (as critical shock)
“Community resilience, social capital and territorial governance”

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El medio rural andaluz frente a la crisis económica: un análisis de los factores de resiliencia territorial

Pedro Sánchez Zamora\textsuperscript{a}, Rosa Gallardo Cobos\textsuperscript{a} y Felisa Ceña Delgado\textsuperscript{a}
“Rural development, economic crisis and territorial resilience. Rural Andalucía”

1. Positive processes of change (development)
   - Resilient response
   - (8 “comarcas”)

2. No positive processes of change (development)
   - Resilient response
   - (2 “comarcas”)

3. Positive processes of change (development)
   - No resilient response
   - (9 “comarcas”)

4. No positive processes of change (development)
   - No resilient response
   - (33 “comarcas”)

Processes of change (2000-08)
Resilient response (2008-12)
“Rural development, economic crisis and territorial resilience. Rural Andalucía”
Three concluding questions
“Resilient strategies in northern and southern Europe: towards a smart and sustainable rural development?

1. Could be applied the concept of “resilience” in the context of rural development?: **YES**, since rural areas (as many other social or territorial systems) ...

   - ... are –more or less- vulnerable to many processes, events, changes, policies, etc. Thus, they are facing
     - Events, shocks or disasters (economic crisis and its effects –such as closure of companies--; demographic decline, etc.)
     - Other direct of latent risks

   - Need (anticipating or coping with) risk –management- ➔ resilient strategies?
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2. Are there strategies of resilience in Southern Europe – (Spain)?: NO →

1. “strategy” implies some planned actions anticipating events or shocks or conducting changes to minimise risks (or adapting to such new context). Thus,

2. → we may find mainly individual and immediate –or not-responses: this could be resilience but not necessarily imply a resilient strategy.
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3. Are resilient responses—not strategies—contributing to a smart and sustainable rural development? NOT necessarily

1. E.g. Intensive agricultural production enclaves of Murcia:
   - High vulnerability to external forces (changes in markets, third countries, etc.)
   - Need to quickly increase of productivity in order to compete under the new circumstances.
   - Responses ➔
     - Intensification of production ➔ ecological unsustainability
     - Deterioration of working conditions ➔ social unsustainability
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3. Are resilient responses –not strategies- contributing to -a smart and sustainable- rural development?

NOT necessarily

2. ➔ under absence of real resilient strategies, resilient individual responses could easily imply unsustainability or, in better cases, just very short term solutions, which in turn could be only neutral in terms of sustainability –or even negative in long term-.

3. Do rural areas (and their local actors) have the capacity and abilities to design and implement such a strategies? Unfortunately, very few of them.
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THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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