

Social Capital and its Influence on Community Sustainability and Local Governance Capacity: Case Studies from India, Brazil, Poland, Spain and Sweden

Kapitał społeczny i jego wpływ na zrównoważony rozwój społeczności oraz zdolności lokalnych władz: studia przypadków z Indii, Brazylii, Polski, Hiszpanii i Szwecji

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to conceptualise social capital as a tool for developing rural community resilience through digitalisation tools. To achieve the aim of the study, a case study was conducted based on successful project experiences in India, Brazil, Poland, Spain and Sweden. As a result of the study, five successful practices are identified, which are based on five different approaches to interpret the impact of social capital on community sustainability in rural areas. The analysis determines that the amount of social networks together with digital tools promotes proactive resilience. Reactive resilience can be promoted by slow change of social capital together with digital technologies. Adaptive resilience in rural communities requires a practical emphasis on the diversity of social networks, balancing capitals or contributions from formal organisations and partners. The findings have practical value, as the approaches identified can contribute to understanding how to increase the resilience of rural communities in the context of the interaction between digitalisation and social capital.

Key words: digitalisation, rural areas, collective action, diversity of approaches, local governance networks

Streszczenie

Celem niniejszej pracy jest ujęcie kapitału społecznego jako narzędzia służącego rozwijaniu odporności społeczności wiejskich poprzez narzędzia cyfrowe. Aby osiągnąć cel badania, przeprowadzono studium przypadków oparte na udanych doświadczeniach projektowych w Indiach, Brazylii, Polsce, Hiszpanii i Szwecji. W wyniku badania zidentyfikowano pięć skutecznych praktyk, które opierają się na pięciu różnych podejściach do interpretacji wpływu kapitału społecznego na zrównoważony rozwój społeczności na obszarach wiejskich. Analiza wykazała, że liczba sieci społecznościowych w połączeniu z narzędziami cyfrowymi sprzyja proaktywnej odporności. Reaktywną odporność można promować poprzez powolną zmianę kapitału społecznego w połączeniu z technologiami cyfrowymi. Odporność adaptacyjna w społecznościach wiejskich wymaga praktycznego nacisku na różnorodność sieci społecznościowych, równoważenie kapitałów lub wkładu formalnych organizacji i partnerów. Wyniki mają wartość praktyczną, ponieważ zidentyfikowane podejścia mogą przyczynić się do zrozumienia, w jaki

sposób zwiększyć odporność społeczności wiejskich w kontekście interakcji między cyfryzacją a kapitałem społecznym.

Słowa kluczowe: digitalizacja, obszary wiejskie, działania zbiorowe, różnorodność podejść, lokalne sieci zarządzania

1. Introduction

Promoting sustainable community development is a complex task for rural regions. The constant imbalance between rural and urban residents in different territories creates socio-demographic and economic problems for rural areas. Communities face different challenges that they need to address in the context of resource constraints and socio-ecological transformation, while focusing on the future. This poses particular challenges for small communities and agglomerations for sustainable development. Thus, the relevance of this study is due to the need to identify possible successful approaches to the social capital of rural communities to develop their sustainability. Previously, other researchers have studied the relationship between social capital and sustainable community development internationally. Most often in the scientific literature, social capital refers to social networks based on trust (Zainoddin et al., 2020). At the same time, social capital, which is measured in terms of trust and participation in public life, has a direct impact on the well-being of the population. Such conclusions were reached by researchers A. Kudebayeva et al. (2021) as a result of a study of the relationship between social capital and the well-being of the population of Kyrgyzstan. Social capital is defined as a set of ties within a certain community that facilitate joint actions and efforts of different actors by pooling resources to achieve a certain goal (Mandrysz, 2020; Szelag-Sikora et al., 2025). This ultimately leads to the transfer of knowledge and skills in the process of improving the efficiency of society (Badaruddin et al., 2021). As a result of an interdisciplinary study of strategies to enhance community development, M. Boston et al. (2024) determined that sustainability – efficient functioning through optimised use of resources – is one of the important concepts of the 21st century and is coming to the forefront for various communities. Many researchers have emphasised the importance and feasibility of sustainability in urban communities. For example, in a study of urban development, A. Schmeing (2023) indicated that the level of development can be achieved through socio-spatial, local and political conditions. As a result of an empirical study by I. Saz-Gil et al. (2021) determined that cooperatives in rural areas contribute to the development of internal social capital. Exploring possible approaches to improve the resilience of rural communities to global challenges, Y. Yusriadi and N.A. Kaslin (2025) concluded that strong social ties together with access to resources can provide an optimistic scenario. The problem is that most studies only confirm the positive effect of social capital on rural community development, but do not specify approaches on how this can be realised given the digital opportunities. For example, in a study of social capital in the sustainable development context of three villages in China, Y. Li et al. (2023) concluded that social memory is one of the most important determinants for seizing opportunities through digital tools and achieving sustainable rural development. The transition from informatisation to digitalisation marked the beginning of Industry 4.0, which is associated with the vision of completely new functioning structures based on the extensive use of intelligent information and communication technologies (Hirsch-Kreinsen, 2020; Boccaccio et al., 2019). Digital transformation is characterised by four attributes: inevitability, high speed, uncertainty of implementation, and irreversibility (Vogel-Heuser and Bengler, 2023). The concept of community resilience has many different interpretations. M. Boston et al. (2024) points out that balanced community development is defined by four main concepts. The first interpretation is that the sustainable functioning of a certain area is the ability of the system to cope with disturbances through adaptation, recovery or transformation. The second definition suggests that the concept in question acts as an equitable and inclusive space for community resilience. Another concept views resilient communities as a defined strategy with a defined timeframe and opportunities for implementation. According to a fourth concept, community resilience is both a process and a goal, which requires a holistic approach.

Three concepts serve as the basis for this study: community resilience, digitalisation, and social capital. Consequently, this study focuses on finding out how social capital can affect community resilience and what kind of resilience. For rural areas, this thinking and action means a constant focus on the goal towards increased resilience through actors and tools. This opens up greater opportunities for action for socially sustainable rural development. The aim of this study was to identify approaches to utilise social capital together with digital tools to promote sustainable development in rural communities. To achieve the research objective, the following tasks were solved: to search for and analyse real successful practices of combining the concepts of digitalisation, social capital and community sustainability internationally; to identify the conceptual role of social capital for rural sustainability; to determine which type of community sustainability is affected by each of the identified approaches.

2. Materials and methods

The method of case study – an in-depth contextual study of implemented practices – was chosen as the basis of analysis. This is important to underpin the theoretical basis of the study with practical aspects and to provide rural communities with an opportunity to learn from the experience gained. Also, the perspective of Sustainable Development Goals was taken into consideration in the research process as this approach provides a unified, globally recognised framework to address pressing challenges like poverty, inequality, climate change, and environmental degradation while promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth. By aligning projects and initiatives with the SDGs, it was ensured that efforts were not only locally relevant but also contributed to a broader, collective global vision for a more equitable and sustainable future.

Three main criteria were established for the selection of case studies. First of all, case studies that were characterised by completeness of information were selected. This criterion was adopted so that the selected case studies would help to rethink the link between social capital, digitalisation and sustainable development of rural settlements. Another criterion was not only the accessibility of the case study information, but also the possibility to check it on the official project websites. Other selection criteria were the focus on the rural community and the use of social capital and digitalisation as central elements of improvements. These countries were chosen to provide a balance between regional diversity and the applicability of the interventions, with case studies from Europe, Asia, and Latin America included. The higher proportion of European case studies (60%) is justified by the region's advanced digital infrastructure and the robust integration of sustainable development policies in rural areas. Europe has been at the forefront of implementing digital tools for rural development, particularly through EU-funded initiatives like SmartAgriHubs and Smart Villages. These initiatives are highly documented and offer valuable insights into scaling digital solutions in rural areas, making them essential for understanding the global context of rural sustainability. While Asia and Latin America provide important case studies, they represent a smaller proportion due to less widespread implementation of similar digital solutions in rural areas. Five case studies were selected as a result of a search for projects implemented in practice (Table 1).

Table 1. Brief characteristics of the projects in the five case studies, *source: created by the authors based on A. Choudhary (2021); J.A. De Morais and A.B.F. Callou (2017); M. Feurich et al. (2024); S. Mohanty et al. (2020); M. Mukerji (2020); A. Paniagua (2020); V. Zavratinik et al. (2019).*

Case number	Project name	Country	A year of implementation in practice
1	e-Choupal	India	2000
2	SmartAgriHubs	Poland	2018
3	Smart Village Spain	Spain	2018
4	Rural Living Labs	Sweden	2000
5	Projeto Dom Helder Camara	Brazil	2002

Given the data presented in Table 1, it can be concluded that regional diversity was also taken into account in the selection of examples. Therefore, part of the empirical base of this study is based on examples from projects implemented in Europe (60% of selected case studies). In addition, case studies from Asia (20% of selected case studies) and Latin America (20% of selected case studies) are included in the empirical framework.

Case 1: e-Choupal in India. In the example below, social capital is used as a resource to build trust and interaction among farmers, with an emphasis on their numbers. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are being used extensively around the world for community development. These technologies collect, store and process information, enabling information exchange between physical and virtual objects. ICTs are the driving force for engaging the people of a particular community in the governance process (Mohanty et al., 2020). India has not been an exception in this regard. In 2000, an Indian tobacco company introduced a project called e-Choupal, which enabled farmers to quickly and in real time get information on productivity improvements as well as costs associated with market transactions. Interact directly with processors. The implementation of this technology included: direct procurement, formation of virtual procurement channels, price and quality control of goods, resulting in efficiency gains (Mukerji, 2020). Thus, the developed project represented an alternative model to the traditional procurement process in agriculture (Choudhary, 2021).

Case 2: SmartAgriHubs in Poland. In this case study, social capital, namely its diversity, is seen as a tool for fostering cooperation and knowledge sharing in the community. Artificial intelligence (AI) is being actively used in the European Union (EU) as the basis for the SmartAgriHubs digital innovation hubs project. The project involves the creation and physical location in rural areas of innovative research centers providing best practices, knowledge and technologies. Such hubs are created to support users in digital innovation pilot projects and, if necessary, to financially support the realisation of new ideas and developments. This project was designed to promote precision farming and facilitate farmers' access to financial services and is operating effectively in Poland (Anghel, 2025; Feurich et al., 2024).

Case 3: Smart Village in Spain. In this case study, social capital acts as a link between sustainability and digital technologies, while improving civic engagement. Due to the decreasing population in rural areas, the EU has developed a Smart Village program based on digital technologies. Spain is considered one of the most effective examples of this program implementation in the academic literature. The aim of such an initiative is to improve local governance, empower rural residents and stimulate entrepreneurship (Mohanty et al., 2020). The Smart Village initiative designed for rural development in Spain covered five main areas: promotion of rural tourism through mobile applications, development of public analytics, intelligent mobility, counseling of vulnerable groups and e-administration for the management of municipalities (Paniagua, 2020). Various devices in cyber-physical systems have been the main tools for realising such steps. For example, in practice, using the Internet of Things (IoT), a waste management system with online transmission of load data and waste monitoring through wireless sensor networks (WSNs) was realised. In addition, smart villages have utilised cloud computing to store data collected from sensors or WSNs (Mohanty et al., 2020; Fernández and Peek, 2023).

Case 4: Rural Living Labs in Sweden. In this case, social capital acts as a foundation for rural development, forming active interaction and trust between participants. Living Labs, like Smart Village, are based on human capital and aim at rural development. The functioning of Living Labs is based on ICT, infrastructure, governance, partners and users, and research and development. *Living Labs* for rural community is a concept of creating an ecosystem where synergy is established between various actors, namely residents, entrepreneurs, administrators, etc. One successful example of implementation is the Living Labs in Sweden, namely Botnia Living Lab and Halmstad Living Lab, established to develop the social, economic and environmental well-being of the respective communities. The success of this project is due to the collaboration of different stakeholders and organisations, as innovation does not emerge in isolation, but at the intersection of digital technologies and the social capital of a community based on a cyclical economy. In such a space, new services and products based on innovative ideas emerge, helping people to co-create a sustainable and open to change future together (Zavratnik et al., 2019).

Case 5: Dom Helder Camara in Brazil. In this case study, social capital is used as an effective tool for building trust between villagers and other stakeholders, with a focus on attic cooperation. Dom Helder Camara was implemented in the Moacir Lucena settlement in 2002. It was a new model of possible rural development that advocated intervention in rural communities based on the principles of knowledge dialog and local development. Dom Helder Camara project was based on encouraging the rural population to develop listening skills on the part of technicians regarding farmers' demands, planning meetings to collectively decide on actions, courses tailored to the needs and respect for local culture, contacts between settlers and other communities, confrontation and conflict resolution (De Moraes and Callou, 2017). In addition, the project involved informal education based on knowledge sharing. Such interventions helped Moacir Lucena households experience different forms of technical assistance and rural extension from a local development perspective.

3. Results

This study connects with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly with SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities): Through the promotion of digitalisation and social capital, these case studies contribute to improving livelihoods and providing better access to resources for rural communities. Projects like e-Choupal in India directly address food security through more efficient agricultural practices and better market access. The integration of digital tools and the promotion of innovation hubs, as seen in SmartAgriHubs in Poland, supports sustainable industry growth. The Smart Village initiatives in Spain and Sweden contribute to building sustainable rural communities, utilising technology to enhance local governance and services.

In combining the concepts of digitalisation, social capital and community sustainability, case studies from five countries have shown successful implementation of projects in practice and an effective combination of implemented measures for rural communities on different continents (Table 2).

Table 2. Interaction of digital tools and social capital for building community resilience, source: created by the authors

Case number	Approach to social capital	Type of community sustainability
1	Number of social networks with digital tools	Proactive
2	Diversity of social networks with digital tools	Adaptive
3	Balancing capitals with digital tools	Adaptive
4	Formal organisations and partnerships with digital tools	Adaptive
5	Slow change of capitals with digital tools	Reactive

Based on the results of Table 2, it can be concluded that the implementation of various projects to develop the sustainability of rural communities began at the beginning of the 21st century and has been actively pursued for a long time. At the same time, the various projects have been implemented internationally, both in European countries and in Latin American and Asian countries, which indicates their value. Each of the projects, and hence the

ways in which social capital and technology are influencing the development of rural communities, are presented in more detail in each of the five case studies below. As a result of analysing the five case studies, five different approaches are identified, each of which identifies ways in which social capital together with digital technologies can influence sustainable rural community development and local governance capabilities. Based on the information presented in Table 2, it can be concluded that different approaches to social capital, together with digital technologies, form three main types of community resilience, the differences between which are key to understanding the application of the approaches under study in practice. Proactive resilience is aimed at anticipating risks, adaptive resilience is focused on flexibility and adaptation, and reactive resilience is aimed at returning to the previous functioning after a decline or crisis.

The first case analysing the implementation of the e-Choupal project in India points to the importance of the number of networks among the rural population. It is the number of networks that can play an important role for proactive sustainable development. ICT acts as a bridge in this regard. On one hand, this project has contributed to ICT planning and adoption, corporate social responsibility (CSR) among farmers. On the other hand, e-Choupal has contributed to increase the profit of farmers. By raising awareness, ICT has contributed to employment growth, poverty alleviation and improved the standard of living of people in rural India. This project was an example of successful implementation of ICT to strengthen linkages in the agricultural market while maintaining transparency in the system (Mohanty et al., 2020; Mukerji, 2020).

The second case study on the implementation of SmartAgriHubs in Poland focuses on network diversity affecting sustainable rural development. SmartAgriHubs is designed in such a way that, based on the analysis of big data on soil, climate and market prices, it offers farmers recommendations on how to plan and invest in a certain type of crops. It is diversity, not just quantity as presented in the first case study, that contributes to new ideas, knowledge or information. Such outcomes ultimately influence learning, simultaneous decision-making and cooperation (Anghel, 2025; Hrinchenko et al., 2023).

The third case study, which described the implementation of Smart Village in Spain, indicates that other resources and opportunities besides social capital are important for rural development, as the case study focused on community management that takes into account natural, economic, social and physical determinants. Such actions contribute to the adaptive resilience of rural areas. In this case, social capital not only promotes self-organisation of the rural community, but also facilitates the implementation of digital technologies, thanks to mutual trust and the use of resources.

The fourth case study, namely the implementation of Rural Living Labs in Sweden, highlights that formal organisations are important for sustainable rural development, as Living Labs implement collective action through digital tools and technologies, resulting in adaptive resilience of rural communities. As a result, opportunities for sustainable rural development and the preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage are enhanced. By bringing together stakeholders from different spheres of local life, the Living Labs approach creates a dynamic ecosystem based on the sustainable use of local resources and opens up opportunities for diversifying community economies (Zavratnik et al., 2019; Hajiyeva et al., 2025).

The fifth case study emphasises that the House of Helder Kamara was able to take into account local economic opportunities and potential, collectively manage decision-making processes in the community, and promote the development of farmers' associations and autonomy. Despite the discontinuation of Dom Helder Camara activities in Moakir Lucena, these aspects contributed to improving the quality of life of the participants, as well as their awareness of the importance of collective work in solving economic and social problems in rural areas. Thanks to Dom Helder Camara, slowly changing determinants such as the nature of relations in the rural community, the experience of area development and the correct approach to the use of Moakir Lucena's natural resources were strengthened (De Morais and Callou, 2017).

Thus, the five analysed cases demonstrate five effective approaches to building one of the three types of rural community resilience through the development of digital technologies and social capital. Accordingly, one of the five proposed approaches can be implemented in practice by communities, depending on the tasks and development goals set.

The study integrated the three main paradigms of sustainable development (social, economic, and environmental sustainability) through the promotion of social capital and digital tools in rural communities. Social sustainability is addressed through community engagement and social cohesion, as demonstrated in the Dom Helder Camara project in Brazil and SmartAgriHubs in Poland, where social capital is key to fostering collaboration. Economic sustainability is emphasised by the economic benefits of digital tools, with projects like e-Choupal in India and Smart Village in Spain improving agricultural productivity and market access, thereby enhancing local economic resilience. Environmental sustainability is highlighted in initiatives such as Rural Living Labs in Sweden and Smart Village in Spain, where sustainable agricultural practices and efficient resource use are crucial to long-term community resilience. Differences between countries are evident in the focus of these projects: while European case studies primarily focus on integrating digital innovation with social capital to enhance community governance and infrastructure, Asian projects like e-Choupal in India prioritise improving market access and agricultural productivity. Latin American case studies, such as Dom Helder Camara in Brazil, focus on grassroots community

empowerment and trust-building to address local socio-economic challenges, demonstrating varying approaches to sustainability based on regional needs and capacities.

4. Findings

As a result of the analysis, social capital was considered as part of rural development. As a result of the study of the mechanisms of interaction between social capital and digital tools on the sustainability of rural communities, the specific features of each case study were identified and it was possible to distinguish them into five separate approaches.

The first approach, found in practice in India, emphasises the number of social networks in rural areas, as it is the amount of social capital that can ultimately contribute to proactive community resilience. That is, the number of networks influences actions aimed at rapid response to emergencies. Such findings are consistent with the results of the analysis of S. Chaudhuri et al. (2021) who reached similar conclusions. Similar results were also reached by B. Yang et al. (2020), analysing the sustainability of rural communities in China. The researchers determined that a cooperative community in rural areas has a better chance of sustainable development, while autonomous communities are limited because they are inhabited by older residents who do not have sufficient resources for adaptation.

The second approach points to the central role of social network diversity. Thus, this approach helps farmers to optimise operations and investments, leading to a more adaptive sustainable and profitable rural economy, as demonstrated by a successful rural example in Poland. In addition, through the implementation of such a project, not only is the development gap between urban and rural environments reduced, but also the adaptive resilience of the community is achieved. The value of expanding social networks was also noted as a result of the study by N.B.I. Wulandhari et al. (2022) who found that it is diversity that improves the flexibility and responsiveness of communities. Similar findings were also reached by T. Slijper et al. (2022) who argued that both formal and informal networks are important for farmers in developing rural resilience. The results are also consistent with the findings of a study that came to similar conclusions.

The third approach used in Spain is based on balancing different capitals, which also contributes to adaptive resilience. Such findings are consistent with the results of L. Mngumi (2021), who reached a similar conclusion with data from Tanzania. Hence, this approach confirms its international relevance.

Formal organisations and partners also contribute to achieving adaptive resilience for rural society, as evidenced by the fourth approach found in practice in Sweden. That is, such actions presuppose a society's ability to survive and function successfully in a changing environment through a systemic approach and an ongoing process of reflection and learning. Such findings are consistent with the results of an interview conducted by A. Aritenang (2021) in Indonesia. As a result, the researcher found that the involvement of various stakeholders contributes to rural development. This is especially true for supporting entrepreneurial activities. M. Masud-All-Kamal et al. (2021) as well as R. McAreavey (2022) came to similar conclusions.

The fifth approach places at the centre of rural community development the slow change of social capital through community interaction, which eventually leads to reactive sustainability. That is, it is about achieving stability and returning the status quo of rural areas, as well as creating conditions for *normal* functioning and strengthening the existing system, increasing positive effects in both the short and long term. The changes presented in the fifth case study are aimed at the long-term perspective and form sustainable development of the territory at the expense of natural, cultural, social and human capital. It can be concluded that the fifth case study example on the realisation of Projeto Dom Helder Camara in Brazil, shows the important relationship of network structures with trust and sustainability. This implies a continuous process of change. Through the analysis of seven case studies, M. Rivera et al. (2018) came to similar conclusions, arguing that trust, sense of community and cooperation are the main aspects to pay attention to when developing rural areas through social capital. Such conclusions are supported by the results of the study by I.N.H. Maulana and T.F. Wardah (2023), where the researchers pointed out that resilience is not only shaped by social networks, but also by values and local governance. The quality of communication is a key aspect of success in such a process, as found by Z. Moghfeli et al. (2022) by analysing the development of three Iranian villages.

These are just a few examples of the many uses of digital devices applied in rural areas and adapted to a community where the main actors are the villagers themselves. Thus, it can be concluded that the five approaches demonstrate the different ways in which social capital combined with digital technologies is seen as a source of some type of sustainability for rural communities. This diversity stems from different understandings of social capital and the concept of sustainability, reflecting differences in their fundamental basis. For example, structural aspects of social capital influence proactive resilience, while resourcing and learning influence adaptive and reactive resilience. Consequently, it is determined that social capital is a central aspect in the investigated relationship between the concepts of community resilience, digitalisation and social capital. It can be concluded that the identified approaches can be applied to the development of rural communities around the world, based on goals and resources.

The study identified three types of community sustainability (adaptive, proactive, and reactive) that are achieved through the integration of social capital and digital tools, directly contributing to various SDGs. Adaptive sustainability, emphasised in case studies like Smart Village in Spain and Rural Living Labs in Sweden, supports SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by enhancing community flexibility through network diversity and organisational partnerships. Proactive sustainability, demonstrated in India's e-Choupal, aligns with SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) by leveraging digital tools to improve agricultural productivity and market access, helping communities anticipate and manage risks. Reactive sustainability, as seen in Brazil's Dom Helder Camara, fosters SDG 1 (No Poverty) by enabling rural communities to rebuild and stabilise after disruptions through gradual changes in social networks.

5. Conclusions

The results of the study showed the diversity of implemented practical examples of community sustainability development and the impact of social capital and digital tools on this development. Based on the experience of successful international practices, possible approaches of social capital impact in combination with digital tools that can be used by rural communities to improve sustainability are highlighted.

A cross-country analysis of five case studies from Poland, Spain, Sweden, India and Brazil revealed that all five approaches play an important role in rural community development initiatives in different ways. The approaches identified in this study are aimed at preserving and developing the community and the common good, and therefore quality of life. The results of the study show that proactive sustainable development is achieved through the expansion of social media combined with digital tools. Adaptive sustainable development of rural communities is possible through structural improvements of social capital, namely the diversity of social networks, on the one hand. On the other hand, a jointly developed vision not only facilitates the discussion of development goals and paths, but also serves as a basis for pooling resources, finding partners and developing new ideas that utilise the interplay between physical design and subjective experience as a potential for local development. Reactive community resilience is achieved through incremental changes in capitals and a focus on long-term improvement.

A qualitative methodology rather than a quantitative methodology was chosen as the most appropriate to determine the relationship between digital tools, social capital and community resilience because the qualitative method focuses on openness and flexibility. The openness and flexibility of the qualitative research methodology allowed the topic to be analysed, multiple factors to be taken into account and the methodology to be adapted to the specificities of the context. Since, the topic of social capital and its impact on community resilience is complex in terms of interrelationships and mechanisms of influence, it is important to conduct the following research. Given the diversity of existing approaches and already implemented projects on sustainable rural development through social capital and digital technologies, the identified approaches based on the five case studies do not cover the diversity of practices, which is a limitation of this study. Therefore, it is worthwhile to conduct the following study focusing on a systematic analysis of successful practices to explore this topic in more detail. Such results will help to identify possible missed aspects of this study and identify more possible approaches that different rural communities can put into practice.

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