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EPISTEMOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS AND EMERGING PARADIGMS IN THE
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**THE ANALYTICAL POWER OF COMMUNITY RESILIENCE IN
CONTEMPORARY RURAL STUDIES**

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The aim of this paper is to present the potential and limitations of the concept of community resilience within contemporary debates in rural sociology. This analysis is based on a literature review. Community resilience refers to the capacity of a community to absorb transformations or disturbances and, in response, adapt or transform its functions (Magis, 2010). This understanding aligns with the idea that resilience is a process sustained by a network of adaptive capacities—resources with dynamic attributes—that enable communities to respond, reorganize, and generate new possibilities after situations of adversity (Cutter et al., 2008).

In the context of the climate emergency and the economic, social, and political challenges that shape rural life, the concept underscores the role of communities as spaces for building collective capacities and confronting contemporary crises. Zautra (2008) argues that community resilience comprises three interdependent

dimensions: the individual, related to psychological well-being; the relational, associated with social bonds, solidarity, and support networks; and the structural, linked to strong local institutions, inclusive policies, and economic and social capital.

From a critical standpoint, however, Ledwith (2021) cautions that community development has been co-opted by neoliberal approaches that depoliticize collective action, turning it into an instrument of governance and social control. Discourses of “autonomy” and “responsibilization,” she argues, mask the structural causes of poverty and obscure the power relations that shape inequalities, particularly at the intersections of class, gender, race, and territory.

Acknowledging this critique, I argue that community resilience, with its analytical breadth, allows engagement with key dimensions such as community participation and governance; social networks and cooperation; cultural identity and heritage; environmental management; productive diversification; learning and capacity-building; innovation in times of crisis; infrastructure; relations with public policies; economic sustainability; conflict mediation; and community projects oriented toward the future.

Palavras-chave: community resilience; climate crisis; rural sociology; collective action; rural communities.