

## A Literature Review on Potential of Geographical Indications in Rural Development

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### Abstract

*Various researchers have expressed an interest in studying and analyzing the products with special characteristics linked to the territory, which fall under the category of PDO, PGI or TSG. These unique, specific and rare products are strongly connected to agricultural activity. They support the territory identity and promotion, as well as economic development.*

*To track the deep value and potential of such products, an in-depth literature review was conducted in order to understand and assess several components related to these products such as: Geographical Indication (GI) products and their marketing, impact of local products and GI schemes to rural development, factors affecting consumer behavior, products supporting culinary tourism etc.*

**Keywords:** typical local products, geographical indications, rural development, agriculture, culinary tourism etc.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is a significant contributor to economy growth, and one of the main sources of meeting domestic consumption needs. Rural areas can develop agriculture related to local products and increase their income, by taking into account their geographical origin. Local products incorporate and valorize special characteristics of the territory. These products, are part of the country's culture and tradition, which represent interesting and attractive elements for rural and touristic development of areas.

### 2. METHOD AND PROCEDURES

The methodology used for researching on this topic was qualitative one. For this article have been analyzed different articles on issues such as definition for local products, geographical indications, premium pricing, consumer behavior, motivations for local

food consumption, culinary tourism, rural development, legislation etc. Research issues have been put forth in the form of research questions as follows:

*RQ1. "What are the local and territory products?"*

*RQ2. "What are the socio-economic impacts of implementing geographical indication (GI) schemes on local agricultural production and rural development?"*

*RQ3. "How do geographical indications (GIs) and culinary influence the development of rural tourism?"*

*RQ5: "What countries apply (GI) schemes?"*

For reviewing the literature, were selected 63 articles answering research questions, and that were published throughout the years in EBSCO, Sage, Elsevier, Wiley, Google Scholar etc.

### **3. THEORITICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **3.1 Product interplay with geography, culture and tradition**

Local product means everything that is produced in a certain place, even without being connected to its culture and tradition (Idda et.al, 2004). According to Roos et al. (2007), "local food is no longer just food that is produced nearby by people you know. In addition, it refers to a product that has travelled long distances, and has a label that reminds shoppers of the product's imbedded local component. Local products are related to "gastronomy, tradition, authenticity, origin, quality, distance, social relations, production and sustainability". Typical products with Geographical Indications are territory products that have specific and unique characteristics linked to the origin area. The relationship between a particular product and its geographic region is rooted not only in climatic characteristics but also in socio-anthropological ones. It is closely related to the material production assets and immaterial ones (e.g knowledge of local people and historical memory).

There are several countries known for the rich culinary traditions and strong local identities such as the Mediterranean-bordering European countries, particularly Italy and France. These countries can be named as the "cradle" of the typical food products (in French: produits du terroir), which are generally referred to as products that are distinctive because they are native to a location, or products that owe their uniqueness to a connection with the region of production (Arfini et. al 2010). The typical product own specific attributes known as "internal ones" which are related to the local culture, environment, traditional agricultural practices. In the context of the transformation processes of agri-food systems and their globalization, the link to the territory also generates characteristics that we could define as "ideal," or inherent to what the typical product expresses (naturalness, resistance to mass consumption and globalization, defense of small-scale production Belletti, 2003). Territoriality is described as "the ecological and cultural interaction that a food system has with its territorial environment" (Sonnino, 2007, in Bowen, 2010) or as "the degree of physical connection with the place of origin" (van der Meulen, 2007).

Terroir is a French word that refers to the relationship between people, place, and taste. It comes from the Latin word territorium, which meaning territory (Maréchal, 2009; Trubek, 2008). There is a close connection of the soil, air, water, climate, seasons, and food, when referring to the French term of terroir (Barham, 2003; Demossier, 2011; Maréchal, 2009; Trubek, 2008). Furthermore, terroir is a concept that is not simply related to geographical aspect but also to the cultural one. It is related to

the geographical and human component that combines aspects from the natural and social worlds (Amilien et al., 2007). On the one hand, it consists of the tangible components associated with the environmental conditions in which food items are bred, raised, or harvested. It also highlights the evaluation and preservation of rural and traditional knowledge and cultural origins (Barham, 2003; Dekhili and d'Hauteville, 2009; Maréchal, 2009; Pratt, 2007), reflecting the strong interplay between natural and social components. A peculiar food with distinctive characteristics is produced as a result of the geographic, ecological, and climatic conditions of the source area as well as human contribution.

### **3.2 Geographical Indications: A Catalyst for Rural Development**

Geographical Indications (GIs) are one of the most effective tools used in differentiating and branding agricultural products of their source region. They create new economic opportunities, sustain cultural diversity, and promote sustainable use of the environment. Related to this a research questions was raised:

*What are the mechanisms through which GIs can contribute this way?* GIs has become an important part of the rural development due to the association of these products with geographical location and specific qualities that set them apart from other similar products. These products help producers in rural areas generate more incomes as they can set higher prices due to the intrinsic specific quality and can benefit from increased market opportunities such as growth in sales. Thus, GI certified products fetch a premium price as consumers believe that the products are of better quality and made with traditional methods (Belletti et al., 2017, Parcell and Gedikoglu, 2012).

Two are important components that positively affect consumer's willingness to pay for the product: quality and authenticity labels (Menapace et al., 2011). Both are strong contributors for shifts in consumer trends or variations in production (Moschini Teuber, et 2011). Quality and authenticity provide good opportunities as well for increasing the producers' income and building consumer trust (Deselnicu and et returns al., 2013). Furthermore, GIs play a critical role in the protection of knowledge, and cultural practices thus improving the rural community's sense of belonging. Cultural resources management also help in improving the community participation and cohesiveness. Through the protection of the traditional practices and the enhancement of people's identity, GIs help to the community especially in the rural areas (Bowen 2010). However, there are some drawbacks: benefits are not equally shared among the stakeholders and small producers are also faced with difficulties such as expensive and bureaucratic factors (Chabrol et al., 2017).

The advent of GIs brings about encouragement of the development of SMEs and boost employment in the rural areas. GIs help in regulating and maintaining environmentally friendly production and conservation of varieties and species as well as habitats. Furthermore, where there is applied institutional framework related to GIs, it results better and more sustainable use of resources (Reviron & Chappuis, 2011, Gangjee, 2017). Thus the environmental impacts of GIs are determined by the strength of governance and producers' commitment.

### **3.3 Types of GI Schemes**

A geographical indication (GI) is a type of intellectual property that identifies a product which reputation and quality is related to a region/locality/territory (UNIDO, 2010). However, this definition is given also in legal terms. The European Union (EU) policies

on quality aim precisely the recognition and protection of the names of specific agricultural and food products through four quality schemes:

PDO (protected designation of origin) indicates that the product originates from a certain territory and that its quality or characteristics are essential or exclusive because of its origin. All steps of the production of agricultural products and food items must originate from the same region including the raw material.

PGI (protected geographical indication) indicates that the product originates from a certain territory to which a certain quality, reputation or other characteristics related to its origin can be attributed. At least one of the production steps must take place in the designated territory, which means that the raw material does not necessarily have to originate in the designated geographic area.

TSG (traditional specialties guaranteed). The European Union emphasizes the importance of the traditional characteristics of a product which are attributed to the specific way of production/preparation of the product as well as its composition and which is directly related to the characteristics of a certain geographical area and its human resources.

Mountain products. The quality term 'mountain product' highlights the specificities of a product, made in mountain areas, with difficult natural conditions. Raw materials come from mountain areas. For processed products, production should take place in such areas. PDOs and PGIs products focus on particular areas, and are produced by certain producers. Thus, their "success" is highly influenced by the number, the choices, and the practices of the producers in production.

### **3.4 Branding and Geographical Distinctiveness**

For consumer information and marketing reasons it is very important to identify and distinguish a product from others through brands. The same can be applied for products of territory with distinguished characteristics depending on their origin. The distinguished and well-known products in market can be registered as a brand. Considering the brand concept it is important here to distinguish individual and collective brands. Brand is a type of intellectual property, that contains a name, word, phrase, logo, symbol, design or a combination of these elements used by individuals, organizations or other legal entities, to specifically identify and distinguish the type of services/products, from the services/products of others.

As part of a company's marketing strategy, individual branding involves giving a product a new identity, a distinct brand name, and the independent function to operate on its own. It contributes to positioning the product as a unique one and protects its reputation in the market. The collective brand serves a crucial function specifically as a communication and guarantee tool for the issues related to typical products (Albisinni, Carretta, 2003). It is a trademark that is required by parties, either individually or collectively, with the aim of ensuring the nature, quality, and origin of specific products or services. The trademark is public if it is owned by a public entity, whereas is private if it is owned by a private entity, typically in the form of a partnership or an association, as defined by law. Protected designations of origin (PDO), protected geographical indications (PGI) and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG) are geographically distinctive signs, whereas certificates of compliance with the standards are distinctive signs of quality provisions on organic production (Gicomini, Mancini, Menozzi e Cernicchiaro, 2007).

### **3.5 Consumer Behavior and Premium Pricing**

Consumer behavior is related to product choice and the decision to buy. It is influenced by the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of customers. Consumer behavior is influenced by the “product image” that consumers have before and after purchases. This 'priori' perception of a product is known as 'quality expectation' and is based on the customers' expectations (Kupice and Ravell, 1998). Consumer behavior is also impacted by several factors. Studying the influencing factors is important, as it can help marketers and policymakers design their marketing and regulatory strategies. Since decades, research has been conducted for European countries regarding the impact of geographical origins on consumer preferences and related willingness to pay (Pilone et al., 2015).

As cited by researches for Portugal, Italy, France, and Denmark, it was found that the labeling attribute (price, texture, and unit of sale) was the most crucial factor in selecting the product. Consumers are influenced and are willing to pay for PDO or organic certification. (Zhllima et al., 2012b). The application of a premium price, strongly related to the willingness of consumers to pay for origin, indicates how well a GI strategy works. Factors affecting the premium price is associated to the trust of the product, well-known brand, and safe product within standards. It also offers particular sensorial characteristics (Kokthi, E., et al., 2016). GIs premium products are linked also to customers' capacity to trace the food they consume (Teuber, 2010). Customers decide to buy it, based on several attributes like if the product is locally grown, safe, organic, etc. So-called ethical products are coming especially directly from farms or in farmers' markets (Driouech, N.et.al, 2013). Consumers are becoming more distant from production systems because of larger value chains, which influences trust in product safety and ethical concerns (Corcoran et al., 2002). And as a solution to their skepticism is the communication. It plays a crucial part in convincing customers, and the intrinsic qualities are very important in the way the products are marketed (Callon et al., 2002).

### **3.6 Strategies for Effective Marketing**

The identification and marketing of GI products is a complex process which require consideration of frameworks and applying branding strategies, promoting collaboration and understanding tourism.

#### *- Identification of Unique Geographical and Cultural Attributes*

As abovementioned, since the distinctiveness of GI products is associated with certain geographical and cultural characteristics, it is important to investigate the aspects like climate, soil types and even elevation as they determine the qualities of the product (Belletti, Marescotti, & Touzard, 2017). Traditional production methods such as the artisan techniques and equipment also add value to these products (Tregear, Arfini, Belletti, & Marescotti, 2007). Meanwhile, the cultural factors such as, local customs and rituals help to promote the reputation of the products, enhancing the link to the territory (Vandecandelaere et al., 2018).

#### *- Establishment of a Robust Legal and Regulatory Framework*

Legal and regulatory framework sets up production standards as well as measures for the quality control, certification and monitoring systems (Teuber 2011). Measures of enforcement such as trademark protection and fines ensure that the product is not counterfeited and its integrity is maintained (Barjolle & Sylvander, 2002).

#### *- Effective Branding and Promotion Strategies*

It is important to develop a strong brand identity in the marketing of GI products. Targeted promotional activities such as trade fairs and culinary events can help create

awareness and increase the perceived value of these products (Belletti et al., 2007). Storytelling presents the product's heritage and builds consumer trust (Bowen, 2010).

- *Cooperation and Collective Action*

Cooperation between producers, local government and other stakeholders is crucial in identifying and marketing of GI products. Producer associations set up standards in production, marketing and promotion of the product and ensure that the brand of the product is well protected (Belletti et al., 2017). The joint promotional initiatives facilitate the optimization of resources and increase the products' visibility (Rangnekar, 2004).

### **3.7 Importance of GIs for Boosting Economy, Culture and Tourism**

It is a growing interest and evaluation toward the importance of GIs products in the European countries. By applying GI schemes, are preserved the economic value of local products, and agricultural production diversification. A better supply-demand balance is set, farmers income increase and this retains rural populations. The geographical name provides to consumers pertinent information, by communicating the uniqueness and specificity of the product related to its origin, while also serving as a support for the production system's actors to capitalize on the product's reputation that they have built up over time, keeping the quality promise to consumers. Therefore, it is also because of the geographical indication that the typical product can be valorized (Belletti, 2000). The schemes help manufacturers to sell their products better and consumers to recognize the specific character of the product. (European Commission, 2012). By promoting GI mechanisms, agricultural productivity and competitiveness of distinctive local and special agricultural products can boost. GI is acknowledged as a qualification strategy that highlights the socio-cultural territory where the agricultural product is made. The application of GI schemes will have positive effects on productivity, product exports, employment, product value, and supply of natural and distinctive quality products. (Rahmah, M., 2017).

In order for products to be GIs protected, the quality, reputation, and other characteristics of the products must be linked to the territory (Malorgio et al., 2008). Of course there must be a strong tie with the traditional knowledge and practice through time. The schemes can promote rarity. They can represent also a good opportunity to stimulate production in unproductive areas as a benefit to the economy and environment. Limited market and lack of education are the main challenges that need to be overcome to inform farmers and agri-food producers and make them aware of the value of GI products. Public policy can play an important role, especially when it comes to efforts that encourage education and ethical food production and consumption.

### **3.8 Local Cuisine and Tourism**

According to Gartner (as also mentioned by Pike, 2008) motivations start the decision-making process. This happens when a certain need or desire needs to be fulfilled and represents an important variable in relation to the decision to travel and the achievement of satisfaction (Chang, 2007; Correia, Oom do Valle & Moço, 2006). A lot of tourists choose the tourist destination based on food and have positive experiences tasting local products in small places, which are known for their quality and strong connection to the territory. Food is increasingly becoming an important tourist attraction and motivation to travel.

Food accounts for nearly 40% of a tourist's total spending (Belisle, 1983; Hudman, 1986; Waterhouse et al., 1995). Every traveler or visitor needs to eat and drink. This is a requirement for all tourist destinations. The experience of tasting specific food in a tourist destination adds value to tourism supply and demand. Thus, local food is crucial for attracting visitors and boosting a region's appeal (Ardabili, F., 2011). It affects visitors' overall pleasure, it establishes the image of the area (Dhora, R., & Dionizi, B., 2014). Culinary tourism is an enjoyable eating and drinking experience in places where enjoyable food is prepared for fun or entertainment, which includes going to local producers, food fairs, farmers markets, watching cooking demonstrations and engaging in any tourism-related activity involving food (Hall, C.M.; Sharples, L. T 2003).

It is interesting when a farm that combines agricultural production with a rural tourism component is known as agritourism (McGehee, N.G. and Kim, K.;2004). The rural tourism can support the development of the food supply chain, which is determined by the proximity to the areas where the product is produced and marketed, and the consumer can become aware of the typical characteristics of the product (Marsden T., et al., 2000). The production of typical goods can contribute to preserve the traditional way of life and landscapes of rural areas. The preservation of traditional know-how, cultural tradition, and culinary tradition are important social benefits (Kizos, T, 2013). The positive distinction of GI products is related to organoleptic characteristics that distinguish the products from "conventional" products (Kizos, T, 2013). Organoleptic characteristics relate to the senses including taste, sight, smell, and touch etc. Thus, destinations can use such products to become important tourist attractions.

### **3.9 Countries that apply GI**

#### *European Union*

The EU has one of the most advanced GI protection systems in the world with over 3,300 registered products. Some of the major legislations are Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 and Regulation (EU) 2019/787 which relate to agricultural products, foodstuffs, and spirit drinks respectively. Other countries which have embarked on GI registration include Italy, France, Spain and Portugal whereby products such as Parmigiano-Reggiano, Champagne, Rioja wine, and Port wine are well known across the world. The EU GI systems contribute in the process of rural development since the traditional methods of production are preserved, the small scale producers are empowered and sustainable farming practices are promoted with the CAP financial support (European Commission, 2022; Rangnekar, 2004).

#### *Asia*

A number of countries in Asia including India, China, Japan and Thailand have come up with GI symbols to protect their agricultural and food products. In India, some of the products which are protected include Darjeeling tea (as previously mentioned), Basmati rice and Alphonso mangoes under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 where an effort has been made to define the characteristics of these products for their geographical origin (Darjeeling Tea Association, 2004; APEDA, 2016; Geographical Indications Registry, India, 2018). In China, are known Longjing tea, Puer tea etc. which are protected under China's GI system ensuring that the products are produced using the authentic techniques and have the taste determined by the soil conditions (China Geographical Indications Protection System, 2008). In Japan, the GI protection system aim at protecting high

quality products like the Kobe beef, Yubari melon, green tea due to their strict production process and high quality standards (Japan Patent Office, 2012). In Thailand, there are products like Thung Kula Rong-Hai Hom Mali rice and Doi Tung coffee that boost the income of the locals (Department of Intellectual Property, Thailand, 2006).

#### *Other Regions*

Beyond the EU and Asia, other countries such as the United States, Colombia, Kenya, and South Africa have also come up with GI to protect and promote their regional products. In the United States there are Vidalia onions, Florida oranges and Kona coffee which are identified by their characteristics of being grown in certain regions (World Intellectual Property Organization, 2022). In Colombia, are known Café de Colombia and Aguacate de la Laguna which are protected due to their taste and region (Rangnekar, 2004). In Kenya, the GI system also helps to sustain products such as the Kenyan tea and the Kenyan coffee which are prized for their taste and the particular environment in which they are grown (World Intellectual Property Organization, 2022). And in South Africa, the GI system helps in the protection of products such as Rooibos and Karoo lamb whereby their authenticity is maintained and the production is sustainable (World Intellectual Property Organization, 2022).

## **4. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION**

#### *Result*

From the findings of the literature review, the following are the results. **Firstly**, GIs have greatly improve economic prospects for the local producers since they provide a way through which their products can be differentiated by their origin. This differentiation helps in charging a premium price which in turn boosts the income of the producers and hence the local economic development. **Secondly**, GIs have a crucial role in maintaining the quality of products, protecting the consumers against counterfeiting and supporting the rural economies. Hence, such products can help people feel connected to their culture and boost their self-esteem and the overall cohesiveness of the society as well as foster cultural preservation. **Moreover**, GIs have a big impact in the development of rural tourism. The special qualities of GI products create interest among the visitors who are keen on trying out local food which in turn creates other sources of income for the rural population and boost small businesses. **Lastly**, the findings highlight the problems encountered by small-scale producers in accessing the GI schemes. Expenses related to certification and compliance with certain procedures make it difficult for them to participate, which calls for policy changes that would help ease the burden and support them.

#### *Conclusions*

Geographical indications (GIs) are very important products for the rural development and improvement of the local economies through creation of economic activities, protection of cultural resources, encouragement of sustainable practices, and promotion of rural tourism. Through enabling the producers to market their products as originating from certain territories, GIs enable them to charge premium prices by improving the incomes and supporting the growth of the local economy. The impact of GIs in the preservation of the traditional methods of production and cultural identity



help communities to increase their sense of belonging thus promoting the cultural diversity.

GIs are also important in the development of cuisine and rural tourism as it attracts consumers who are likely to purchase products that are associated with authenticity. This integration of tourism with the GI certified products, creates more sources of income for the rural communities and boost micro enterprises. Moreover, GIs build trust of consumers for the products and services they purchase, as they assure quality and origin, which leads to high demand for such products, the local and traditional ones. Nevertheless, GIs face challenges, including the expenses for the certification and unequal distribution of advantages between the producers. Policy makers are urged to simplify GI process for the producers and provide assistance to small-scale producers in order to maximize the GIs benefits, and as a result contribute to foster rural development, economic growth, cultural diversity and sustainability.

To fully harness the potential of Geographical Indications (GIs) for the rural development and economic growth, some policy measures need to be taken such as simplifying the certification process, providing financial and technical support, enhancing governance framework, raising consumer awareness, promoting collaboration including small scale producers, providing capacity building, promoting networking and sustainable practices.

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