FAMILY TIES AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Alberto Alesina  Paola Giuliano
Harvard University  UCLA
IGIER Bocconi

Abstract
We establish an inverse relationship between family ties and political participation, such that the more individuals rely on the family as a provider of services, insurance, transfer of resources, the lower is one's civic engagement and political participation. We also show that strong family ties appear to be a substitute for generalized trust, rather than a complement to it. These three constructs—civic engagement, political participation, and trust—are part of what is known as social capital; therefore, in this paper, we contribute to the investigation of the origin and evolution of social capital. We establish these results using within-country evidence and looking at the behavior of immigrants from various countries in 32 different destination places. (JEL: P16, Z10, Z13)