



Universiteit  
Leiden  
The Netherlands

## **Claiming crisis: an ethnography on agricultural insurance, rural distress and the everyday moralities of quantification in India**

Meerendonk, T. van de

### **Citation**

Meerendonk, T. van de. (2024, March 5). *Claiming crisis: an ethnography on agricultural insurance, rural distress and the everyday moralities of quantification in India*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3719877>

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3719877>

**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

# PROPOSITIONS

## **Relating to the subject:**

1. Historically, insurance professionals have been involved in the creation of agricultural risk. They have done so by 'normalising' misfortune through quantification practices. (Chapter 1)
2. While agricultural crisis is often talked about in policy and academic circles in universal terms, its experience is situated and diverse. (Chapter 2)
3. The quantification of agricultural risk in India by means of indices bears little resemblance to the risks encountered by farmers, as individual risk profiles generally encompass more than what the index measures. (Chapter 3 & 4)
4. Political narratives in rural India increasingly take on quantified vocabularies, where the language of numbers is utilised in political claim making. (Chapter 6)

## **Relating to the field:**

1. We need more ethnographies on insurance quantification as they help understand how factuality has to be enacted through social practice.
2. Rather than a tool for rational governance and redistribution which regulates and dictates action, insurance becomes a coherent governance structure by integrating into the daily lives of those touched by it. This is why a bottom-up approach to insurance provides crucial insights into what comprises it.
3. The increasing role which quantification has in political narratives deserves attention, as this has far reaching consequences for the way in which political contestation takes shape. The notion of technomorality helps us to bring the distinctly moral underpinnings and power asymmetries of such technocratic narratives to the fore.
4. It is productive to focus on the 'moral work' which goes into making sense of the many ambiguities which quantification practices produce, as it shows how people deal with the indeterminacies brought about by numbers.

## **Societal:**

1. As anthropologists we have to foster brevity and clear language in our writing.
2. Research assistants are the unsung heroes of the discipline and they deserve recognition.